Sunday, December 19, 2010 ★★ 32 sections / Vol. 26 / No. 11 P20 | www.inquirer.net | Mobile Alert: Txt REG DR [illegible] to 467 | DETECTIVE 02/10 WEAR

LIGHT OF A MILLION MORNINGS Only God can make a rose last in its annual grand Christmas display, Mara Davao Casa de Amigos y Amigitos in Davao City recreates God's green masterpiece using a dazzling three million lights. The motif of the display is in line with this year's holiday theme of protecting the environment.

Noy to stop Garcia deal

Ex-general's plea bargain to be reviewed

By Norman Bordadora, Alcuin Papa and Leila B. Salaverria

PRESIDENT AQUINO has ordered a review of the plea bargain agreement that resulted in a former military comptroller accused of amassing more than P300 million in ill-gotten assets walking out of jail yesterday.

Mr. Aquino yesterday said he was disappointed that retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia managed to get himself temporarily released from prison and has directed Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa to review the deal that was struck between state prosecutors and Garcia's lawyers.

The Sandiganbayan antigraft court that was trying Garcia for the nonbailable offense of plunder reportedly approved a plea bargain agreement under which Garcia pleaded guilty to the lesser charges of direct bribery and money laundering.

Though the court has yet to issue a resolution approving the deal, Garcia was allowed to post bail of P60,000 for the lesser charges last Thursday and was ordered released, indicating that the court had accepted the plea bargain.

Under the terms of the deal, Garcia has reportedly agreed to return a still unspecified amount that is part of the P303.27 million he allegedly stole.

In return, Garcia will no longer face plunder charges for which there is no bail and carries the penalty of life imprisonment.

Mr. Aquino indicated that he was

NOY TO STOP: A17

INDUSTRY BIGWIGS From left, Mariel P. Prieto, Alessandra de Rossi, Briccio Santos, FDPC chair, film maker Raya Martin and Grace Pon-Llamasares, MTRCB chair

STARRY NIGHT From left, Cherry Pie Picache, Anita Linda, Tessie Tomas, Eugene Domingo and Alessandra de Rossi

Both sides in Webb case 'equally at fault'

By Nikko Dizon

THE SUPREME COURT may crack the whip on those who would violate the sub judice rule and put the institution in "disrepute," Associate Justice Arturo Brion has warned in his supplemental opinion in the tribunal's acquittal of Hubert Webb et al. in connection with the 1991 Vizconde massacre.

Brion, who voted against the acquittal along with three other justices including Chief Justice Renato Corona, defended the high court from the media campaign of the contending parties in the case prior to the release of its decision on Dec. 14.

He noted how one high court justice was "even publicly maligned in the print and broadcast media through unsupported speculations about his intervention in the case."

"That was how bad and how low commentaries about the case had been," he wrote.

Brion said the high court did not op-

BOTH SIDES: A17

TELLING THE FILIPINO STORY TO THE WORLD

Editors' Note: For 25 days, we will be telling stories about the Inquirer to mark the paper's 25th anniversary on Dec. 9, 2010. Some are little inside stories but inspiring; so how we cover unfolding events; some are mark-the-day stories that become talk-of-the-town topic; others are turning point stories that have changed the landscape of history, still others, big or small, seize the heart and never let go.

But wherever, the Inquirer will tell you the story.

The real loser, winner in ad boycott

By Jose Ma. D. Molasco
Managing Editor

THE BIGGEST threat to humanity, according to renowned psychologist Albert Ellis, stems from the irrational demand of certain people that others must absolutely treat them well. These people are a danger, Ellis warned, because in extreme cases they regard those who treat them unkindly as rotten individuals who deserve to be zapped.

Think Sept. 11, 2001, when a bunch of madmen that Ellis may have been referring to slammed two hijacked planes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York because America would not agree with their fundamentalist dogmas.

Think July-November 1998, when the Philippine Daily Inquirer faced its gravest crisis ever—an advertising boycott spear-

THE REAL: A9

UNEASY lies the head that wears the crown: President Joseph Estrada in May 1999.

The trial: From Senate to Edsa, too

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

SEN. JOHN Ostrada stumped from a door behind the right side of the Senate rostrum with a goblet filled with ice on one hand and a newly opened can of soda on the other.

He positioned himself in a spot beside the secretariat seat in front of the rostrum, giving himself a good view of the session hall that teemed with the players of the heated line-shave that season.

The marathon hearing of then President Joseph Estrada (an-

THE TRIAL: A8

PDI hosts, hails 'indies' for reviving PH film as art

By Dayani San Diego Jr.

IN SHOW BIZ parlance, it was a box-office hit and a full house.

An SRO crowd of directors, producers, actors, teachers, critics, cinemaniacs and other film artists and technicians packed the Inquirer's multipurpose hall on Thursday night to celebrate the "indie spirit" in local cinema.

Dubbed the "1st Inquirer Indie Tribute," the event was the paper's way of honoring, on the occasion of its 25th anniversary, 25 independent filmmakers whose "works have touched Filipinos and have raised the bar for the industry and the entertainment media." *(Related story and more pictures on Page B7.)*

Riding the wave of the digital revolution, the 25 honorees have been winning awards, here and abroad, for the past five years.

In her speech welcoming the honorees, Inquirer chair Marixi Rufino-Prieto credited the indies with having "resurrected the movie industry".

"The Inquirer will continue to support your artistic endeavors. We will

PDI HOSTS: A17

'Little' president to hold office in Palace by bay

By DJ Yap

VICE PRESIDENT Jejomar Binay will soon have his little Malacañang by the bay.

By next year, Binay will move into the Coconut Palace, his own official residence with a view of the spectacular Manila Bay sunset and plush bedrooms where the Marcoses and Hollywood stars Brooke Shields and George Hamilton once slept.

But it's not just to satisfy Binay's apparent

LITTLE: A6

• **Raps vs 5** members of 'Morong 43' ridiculous, says lawyer • Make Christ center of holiday decor, urge bishops NEWS • **The prime** of Mommy D • Coming up—the redesigned Philippine currency • 'Is Tita Tessa a real person?' • Check out the Fort! What's in Fort Santiago? Finally, Harry Winston in Manila SUNDAY LIFESTYLE • **Steak man's** daughter turns to desserts SUNDAY BIZ • **Ten ways** to a perfect 'Noche Buena' • For Muslims, it's a season for love and friendship SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Partly cloudy with scattered showers

Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	Manila	Partly Cloudy
Dagupan	Mostly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Mostly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Mostly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Kalibo	Mostly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Source: Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa)

6/49	7 19
4D	4 2
3D	7 6
SUERTRES	
2D	4 0 9
4D	1 4 1
3D	3 4 4

SIX DIGIT	
	8 0 0 9 8 6
6/42 LUZ MIN	
	11 15 19 21 29 32
	P24,188,286.60
6/55 GRANDLOTTO	
	13 25 41 42 44 45
	P10,000,000.00

LOTTO: 7PM Tues-SM LOTTO, result to 10AM. PCSO offices

Charges vs 5 detainees 'ridiculous'

Lawyer says last of 'Morong 43' couldn't have committed crimes

By Kristine Felissa Mangunay and Kristine L. Alave

FIVE MEMBERS of the "Morong 43" remained in detention at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal yesterday because they still allegedly faced a variety of other cases.

Edre Olalia, lawyer for the 43 health workers arrested ordered by President Arroyo, Friday, described the cases against the five as "ranging from the very incredible to the outrageous."

Edwin Bustamante, a resident of southern Luzon, faced himself facing charges of rape in Lin Pilar. He denies he has never even been to that city.

Abdul Garcia, a Bicol resident, allegedly has pending drug-related charges in Quezon City.

Two other detainees—Julieta Cortez and Jeanette de Dios—were charged with violation of Batas Pambansa 22, or the Anti-Bouncing Checks Law.

Olalia said the two health workers, who survive on measly salaries, do not even have checking accounts.

Marie de los Santos, another health worker, has pending charges of murder and illegal detention, added the lawyer.

Olalia said it must be a case of mistaken identity.

"Some of these people have not even been to the places where they supposedly committed the crimes," said Olalia, secretary general of the National Union of People's Lawyers.

All 43 health workers were ordered freed after Judge Elma Cerit-Encare of Branch 78 of the Morong Regional Trial Court and Metropolitan Trial Court Judge Rodrigo Penaflor dismissed charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives, and violation of the election gun ban against them.

A sixth detainee, Ramces de la Cruz, had also been slapped with violation of the firearms check law but was released. Olalia said De la Cruz was not even of legal age when the crime was supposedly committed. He was freed when it was shown that a case against one Ramces de la Cruz had been dismissed on April 8, 1998.

The 43 said they were awaiting a seminar on community health in a few hours in Morong in February when military and police operatives suddenly raided the venue. They were accused of being members of the communist New People's Army (NPA).

Five members of the Morong 43 reportedly admitted their rebel links and would testify for the government side.

Except for those five, the other members of the Morong 43 granted their release with relief and excitement.

Teresa Quintanayan, a midwife who used to work in urban poor areas in Metro Manila, said she was "excited" to go back to work.

"We are excited to go back to our communities. We can expect us to work, even if there are threats to our lives from the military," the midwife-peace worker-mom silently adds they were released.

Quintanayan and 22 other health detainees were the first to emerge from the gates of Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City clenched fists held high, to loud cheering by their relatives and supporters at about 11 p.m. on Friday night.

Ten of the 43 main detainees also walked out after more than ten months in detention.

Their release, a week after President Arroyo ordered the Department of Justice to withdraw the charges against them, was reportedly a gesture of goodwill to help jumpstart the peace talks with the communist rebel group.

The detainees, however, denied being NPA members.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, who was the chair of the Commission on Human Rights when the 43 were arrested, said the warrants issued against them were "defective."

OPHELIA BALLETA (left) rightly embraces her daughter Jane, one of the "Morong 43" released Friday night after 10 months in government detention. The first thing Jane was going to do when she got home was "eat good food," just like the other freed detainees.

In a statement issued yesterday the detainees thanked President Arroyo for ordering their release.

And De Lima for being steadfast in her conviction that their arrest was illegal.

The group also expressed gratitude to their supporters here and abroad for sustaining the chance for their release.

"I hope this is a sign that the President will walk the straight path and that he will show to us that his basis is the people," Mayor Mia Classica, a doctor, said.

Lydia Olmos, the oldest detainee at 65, said the hardest part of their detention was the separation from their families. The grandmother of 10 said, "At my age, I never thought I'd be in prison... It was difficult to be separated from my family. It was torture for me," she said.

Olmos, called Mama Lid by the detainees and other inmates, said she would get a haircut and go shopping when she gets home.

"First I'm going to see a doctor. The food there was not good. I hope to sleep soundly, too," she added.

Jane Balleta, a health worker, said she too was looking forward to eating good food with her family "because we were on a hunger strike (since Dec. 3)," she said.

The detainees said they would seek justice for their imprisonment. They said the charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives were "trumped-up."

"The charge against me was illegal possession of firearms. Look at me. Do I look like I can hold (a firearm) at my age? So very disgusting," Olmos said.

Classica maintained there were no bomb-making devices in their seminar house, as alleged by the military. "It was a legitimate medical training. All we had were medical equipment," she said.

She said the military should be held accountable for their illegal arrests. The group of detainees was also in blame for allowing the military to hold them, she added.

"You could say that we specialize in gifts for people who have everything."

Alex and Clifford Lichaytoo

Once you've been floating our senses – the world's best six-star, the world's best crystal. Are there?

Abu member sentenced to 23 years in US prison

WASHINGTON—A senior member of the Abu Sayyaf terror group was sentenced Friday (yesterday in Manila) to 23 years in a US prison over the kidnapping for ransom of 16 westerners, including four Americans, officials here said.

With former hostages from the 1995 drama watching in Washington courtroom, a judge handed down the punishment to Mudhaffer Nafpe, a Filipino citizen who was extradited to the United States last year.

Nafpe was convicted in the United States because four hostages were American citizens and a fifth was a permanent resident alien. Those five victims and others who flew in from as far away as the Philippines appeared in court during a five-hour hearing and tearfully described how they were still traumatized and suffered psychological problems.

Nafpe, a former professor in Islamic studies, had faced life in prison but received a lighter sentence after pleading guilty. Prosecutors said Nafpe was second in command of the al-Qaida-linked group at the time of the kidnapping.

"It was incredibly gratifying that so many of the victims were able to attend today in an American courtroom and watch the conviction held them hostage be sent to prison for his crimes," federal prosecutor Ronald Eisenberg said.

Nafpe admitted organizing the kidnapping of the 16 people—including six children—in December 1993 near a remote waterfalls in Mindanao.

Sitta Elsie Burger, who was 11 when she was kidnapped along with her parents, said the experience stole her childhood and left her with nightmares of men in camouflage uniforms and an unbearable fear of being chased and subdued.

"You had no right to leave me or grow up," she told Nafpe.

Burger, 48, testified express her more than a decade, mostly living in Malaysia as the owner of a string of small businesses after he said he left the Abu Sayyaf in 1997. But prosecutor Gregg Maisel said, "She wished Nafpe never forgot."

Maisel showed a video the ransomers took shortly before the gunmen attacked them at the Tropic Elsie Spring Resort at Lake Sebu in south Cotabato. The kidnappers appeared suddenly wearing bargues, wielding guns and knives and shouting at the tourists, "Get down, get down!" AFP and AP

PNP will heed HK summons

By Alcuin Papa and Norman Bordadora

THE PHILIPPINE National Police (PNP) said it would heed any summons from a Hong Kong government panel investigating the Quirino Grandstand hostage-taking incident provided it was routed through diplomatic channels.

PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Agnimen Cruz Jr. said reporters in Camp Crame yesterday that they would wait for advice from higher authorities on the matter of the Hong Kong probe, adding that they had "nothing to hide."

Malacañang, however, said it would consider the rights of Filipino citizens first when deciding whether or not to allow local police and officials to answer a summons from Hong Kong.

Hong Kong authorities said Friday they would summon 138 witnesses from the Philippines in their investigation of the hijacking of a tourist bus in Manila in August that led to the deaths of eight Hong Kong tourists. The hostage-taker, a disgruntled former police officer, was also killed.

But Tuesday, a lawyer for the Hong Kong police department, was quoted as saying that the witnesses included Manila Mayor Atienza.

In an interview over state-run radio dzRB, Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte indicated that the government wasn't about to allow Filipino witnesses to testify in Hong Kong's probe of the tragedy without invoking civil law mechanisms.

"Do they want to summon those witnesses to Hong Kong? We need to know many details if that's what they want to happen," Valte said.

"Of course, we want to ensure that the rights of our countrymen will be respected," she added.

Valte said the cost of transportation would also be an issue.

"(Who) will pay for the airfare going there? Will it be the witnesses? Will it be their government or sure one? There are many details that we have to work out before we can assess," Valte said.

Make Jesus center of decor–bishops

By Philip C. Tubeza

CATHOLIC BISHOPS are concerned that Santa Claus is making over Christmas from Baby Jesus.

To keep the Christmas season "Christ-centered," the Catholic Church yesterday urged the faithful to keep the traditional "belen" (the nativity scene) as the centerpiece of their Christmas decorations.

"The best decor for Christmas is the belen. It should be Christ-centered. If you take out the belen from Christmas, then your Christmas does not make sense," said Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, director of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) media office.

He said it was OK to have other Christmas decorations like a Christmas tree but these "should be secondary."

"They should not top a belen. I've seen some one made up of refrigerator materials like ice cream," Quitorio said.

"The focus should be on the belen. The ceremony is secondary. You can do it any way you want. Actually, there are people who use their pailmen and it is OK," he added.

And to help spread Christmas cheer across the globe—particularly among the millions of overseas Filipinos workers away from home—the CBCP will put up this week a website on which people back home can post audio and video greetings to them.

"We will open next week a Christmas for the Filipinos in the World. We will encourage all Filipinos to greet members of the entire Filipino Ethnicity through," Quitorio said.

Quitorio said the website was intended for Filipino seamen on board ships in the world's oceans or those "in faraway lands where there is really no Christmas."

"No one will be greeting them not as a relative but as a fellow Filipino," the CBCP official said.

Quitorio said the CBCP would also be posting online reflections on the Christmas season for Filipinos working in Muslim countries.

Aquino names ex-GMA official to Cabinet

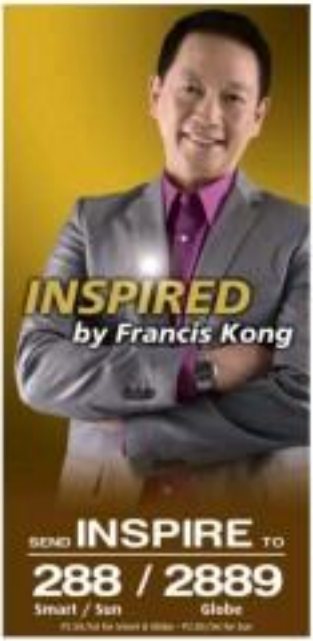
PRESIDENT AQUINO has appointed a member of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet as one of his presidential assistants.

Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte yesterday said former Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun was the new presidential assistant for climate change.

"I know she's really a staunch environmental advocate even after her stint in (the Department of Environment and Natural Resources) so I think it's a very welcome addition to the President's (ethical) family," Valte said over dzRB radio.

Aside from being a former environment secretary, Gozun was previously involved with such groups as Partnership for Clean Air, Government Defense Against Pollution, Earth Day Network in the Philippines and Solid Waste Management Association of the Philippines.

One other appointment that Valte announced was that of Rafael Lagos as a new justice of the Sandiganbayan, antigraft court. Across the shelves



ATTENTION: Classified Advertising
Manila Classifieds

P-Noy won't be getting bonus after all

By Norman Bordadora

IT LOOKS like a republican edict or isn't the only thing President Aquino will be making this Christmas.

The Chief Executive won't be getting his P14,000 share of the multi-billion-peso productivity enhancement incentive (PEI) bonus that he himself granted all government employees in time for the holidays.

Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Abigail Valte made the announcement by way of corroborating an earlier statement that said President Aquino had already received his PEI.

"Upon checking with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the finance staff of the Office of the President, this is incorrect because under the Constitution, the President currently receives his salary and no other emolument," Valte told reporters.

President Aquino on Nov. 23 issued Administrative Order No. 2 authorizing a one-time uniform PEI of P14,000 for all government employees.

"[The] economic has stabilized, investor confidence, trust and faith in the Philippine government have been restored; plans for the effective implementation of government programs such as on education, health, poverty alleviation and job generation are pursued under the platform of good governance," Mr. Aquino said in the AO.

"[These] accomplishments were achieved through the unwavering support, commitment and collaborative efforts of all government employees from all sectors and levels of Philippine bureaucracy," he added.

The DBM said that of the P16,000, 15,000 will come from national government savings through the DBM, while P2,000 will come from the savings of the respective agencies.

"In the event that agencies do not have sufficient savings, they may partially grant their portion in a uniform rate," a DBM said in a news release.

The DBM last week announced that it had released to the Department of Education (Deped) P9.07 billion representing the P30,000 PEI of 310,971 school teachers, principals and Deped employees.

Budget Secretary Florencio B. Abad said that by Dec. 17, the DBM would have fully released the Full P6 billion earmarked government counterpart in the PEI for 1.16 million national government employees.

"This time around, our teachers will receive their PEI within the holiday season, unlike in the past when they received it late, the same time before summer," Abad said.

"We acknowledge the Deped for their work in ensuring the timely release of our teachers' PEI," he added.

DECEMBER TOURS
Adams Express Travel

WOW 69 SULIT SUB
Great tasting! Big savings!
EXTENDED until DEC. 31, 2010
P125 P69
HAM 6" SUB
Add P62 to upgrade to meal
SUBWAY

Truth body's chances slim, admits member

By Christian V. Esguerra

A MEMBER of the embattled Philippine Truth Commission yesterday admitted that the chances of the Supreme Court changing its ruling against the body were "slim."

Commissioner Carlos Medina said members of the panel were instead building on the justices' individual conscience to see through the merits of the motion for reconsideration that Malacañang is preparing to file before the end of the year.

The Supreme Court early this month declared the executive order creating the Truth Commission to specifically its corruption cases during the Arroyo administration a violation of the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

Medina said the Supreme Court had changed its mind in the past after a motion for reconsideration was filed, "So we still cannot say," he said, but added: "If you look at the members, the chances look slim."

"The Christmas season will allow justices, with the help of their families and relatives, to reflect on these issues, the implication of the decision for the New Year. In this season of reflection, we continue to be hopeful. The situation is not hopeless," Medina told the reporters.

In scrapping the Truth Commission, the Supreme Court said it seemed to have been "crafted to tailor fit the prosecution of officials and personalities of the previous administration."

Medina insisted that the commission could not concentrate on but not President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, whom President Aquino had promised to go after during the campaign for the May elections.

EO 1 specifies that the commission would look into massive cases of graft and corruption that took place from 2001 to the first half of 2010, the period when Arroyo was in power.

In the meantime, Medina said the commission had stopped all official work—including accepting complaints—by virtue of a cease-and-desist order that came with the high court ruling.

"While it's not yet clear what the government would do, we temporarily stopped all official functions. We did it out of respect for the Supreme Court," he said.

Pinoy in Iranian prison fears for life, seeks help

By DJ Yap

A FILIPINO who wound up in an Iranian prison on suspicion of drug trafficking is in fear of his life, and his family and friends have been circulating a plea for bail hardly set P4,000 so as to enable him to come home for the holidays.

"Here I am in Mashad prison and I'm a victim of crime of another people. I'm a victim of drug smugglers and I'm begging for mercy because I never know anything," wrote 36-year-old Ernie Gojoso Tamondo.

The undated note to Sedfrey Ringleb found its way to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran (ICHRI), and one of its research assistants sent out a memo to let the Filipino's friends and family know what happened to him.

Later, officials of the Philippine embassy in Tehran informed Tamondo's relatives and friends that he had been sentenced to life imprisonment, and that the embassy had been in touch with him and assisting his attorney January.

In the note, Tamondo, whom friends describe as a student who was also working to help his family, said he visited Iran on a tourist visa in Greece, and he stayed Iran as a tourist and met several men who offered him a job.

When he told the Iranian that he was headed to Malaysian next, the man asked if Tamondo would take a detour to Thailand to deliver some clothes to a friend there. The Iranian offered to pay for his ticket.

Tamondo said he agreed because it meant a free trip and a ticket from Thailand to Malaysia would be cheaper for him.

But at the Iran airport he was arrested by police after the clothes he was carrying were found to contain 2.54 kilos of illegal drugs. The note did not say the kind of drugs. He was sentenced at Mahlabad prison.

"I never take a picture and his address because I never expect he will do bad things to me. He was my friend because he look like a good man he speak English and he even advise me not to trust Iranian because some of them are very [liar]," Tamondo said of the Iranian in his note.

On Nov. 17, the ICHRI posted news of Tamondo's message with a note saying that Philippine authorities must act before it was too late.

The Campaign wrote a letter today to Philippines Foreign Secretary Alberto G. Romulo, expressing concern that Tamondo could face executions without proper representation and urged his government to publicly disclose any information it may have on Tamondo's case," it said.

"For months the Campaign has been reporting about alleged secret, incommunicado prisons and other reliable sources, of recent group executions inside Mashad prison in Mashad," the ICHRI added.

FUMC NURSES TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOU
FATIMA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

UST Pharm '71 reunion

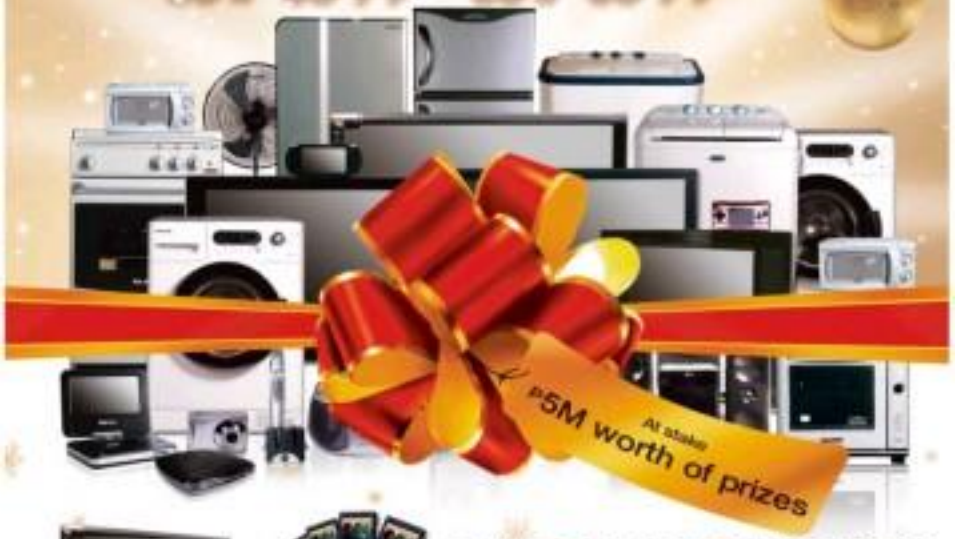
CALLING OB: in any publication, the University of Santo Tomas Pharmacy Class of 1971 is set to hold a grand reunion and homecoming in January 2011 to coincide with the university's quadricentennial celebration of its founding.

For information, contact any of the following: Ma. Winnie Villasis at FLOVILL@yahoo.com; Jenna Ong Apostolic at jennapostolic@yahoo.com or tel. no. 3901037 and cell 0906 2113867; or Lorraine Bhelah Montenegro at 4371887 or cell 0917 2319791.

SM appliance CENTER
our name is your guarantee

YEAR-END DEALS
Now na!
NOVEMBER 14 - JANUARY 16, 2011

libreng APPLIANCES araw-araw



AT STAKE 1 of 8 WEEKLY DRAWS
VIDEO COMBO SETS
- (42") 106.68cm LG LCD TV
- Flip Mino Videocam
- Canon EOS 1000D SLR

(one set per winner)

16 Exclusively for Citibank cardholders
Flip Mino Videocam
(one per winner)

GRAND DRAW 2 **Winners** of NISSAN SportUtility Truck **Navara**

Every P1,000 purchase gives you the chance to win.

citibank 0%

Triple your chances of winning with your Citibank Credit Card. Plus, enjoy 0% PayLite and pay 3 months later!

The most rewarding cards in town.

citibank

BRITISH COUNCIL

British Council IELTS Scholarship

Calling all Filipino students hoping to study abroad.

Apply now!

A scholarship worth $3,500 will be given to seven deserving postgraduate students.

For more information, email ielts@britishcouncil.org.ph or contact us at 02 914 1011-14 extensions 149,158,118,119. Visit our office at 10F Taipan Place, F. Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Check out our website: www.britishcouncil.org.ph

Survey says Pacquiao is best pitchman

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

PACQUIAO

HILD

ITS NO wonder an international betting scoundrel like Manny Pacquiao's choice is all over the place, endorsing everything from telecoms to motorcycles, hamburgers to pain killers.

That's because he is considered the country's most influential celebrity endorser for two years in a row, according to the latest market survey by leading research firm Synergy Basic Consultancy.

Close to 1,400 Filipinos surveyed declared him a credible endorser, and with about 7 out of 10 saying that they buy a product or service because of a celebrity endorser, Pacquiao has indeed become a power marketing buzz.

After Pacquiao came Vicki Belo, whose credibility rose 7 percent from 2009, partly due to her flipflop in the high-profile sex video scandal involving her boyfriend Hayden Kho and movie star Katrina Halili.

According to Germaine Reyes, Synergy managing director, it pays to be the aggrieved party in a controversy.

Such was the case with Belo and actress Iza Calzado, who landed on the list of top 10 product endorsers this year with 11 percent of respondents believing in her as an endorser, after she did not make the list last year.

"Much is a celebrity [role] figured on a controversy, it seems the credibility to endorse may in fact be a good level if he or she is considered the underdog. This is a very Filipino trait that we observe in our country," said Reyes in a statement.

This also partly explains the despicable image of Ampatuan's estranged husband James Yap. Lori Lua, 22 percent of respondents considered him a credible endorser. The rest, it would seem, to television and radio viewers.

Also enjoying improved celebrity status this year were broadcasters Ted Failon, Julius Babao, Mel Tiangco and Tonyo Cruz-Babao.

On the other hand, topping the list of celebrities whose telling poise demanded this year was actress Shaina Rivera, who fell out of the top 10 listings by fourth place ranking last year. Also falling out of favor was model Melissa Marquez and homecare personality Reina Sanchez.

Actress Judy Ann Santos also went down, in the rankings this year, although she remains among the top 10 endorsers. Sharing her fate were actresses Isel Ynig and Mika Salamanca and dentist Kaycee Ho. Pot and Mayor Calixto.

The study however, said that only 31 percent of respondents believed that celebrities, musicians and models made effective endorsers. Ordinary people who had tried a product held more credibility as endorsers than celebrities.

Residential - Condominium Units

Commercial - Condominium Units

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, December 19, 2010
4th Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: Is 7:10-14

Once again Yahweh addressed Ahaz. Ask for a sign from Yahweh your God, let it come either from the deepest depths or from the highest elevation."

But Ahaz answered, "I will not ask, I will not put Yahweh to the test."

Then Isaiah said, "Now listen, descendants of David. Have you not been satisfied trying the patience of people, that you also try the patience of my God? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.

"The Virgin is with child and bears a son, and calls his name Immanuel."

2nd Reading: Rom 1:1-7

From Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, an apostle called and set apart for God's Good News, the very promises he foretold through his prophets in the sacred literature, regarding his Son, who was born in the flesh as a descendant of David, and has been recognized as the Son of God endowed with Power, apart from the dead through the Holy Spirit: Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and mission in all the nations, for them to accept the faith, All of you, the elected of Christ, are part of them, you, the beloved of God (through) called to be holy. May God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Gospel: Mt 1:18-24

This is how Jesus Christ was born. Mary his mother had been given to Joseph in marriage but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Then Joseph, her husband, made plans to go forward in secret. He was an upright man, and he never did his wife to disgrace her.

While he was pondering over this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. She has conceived by the Holy Spirit, and you she will bear a son. You shall call him Jesus for he will save his people from their sins."

All this happened in order to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: The virgin will conceive and bear a son, and he will be called Immanuel which means 'God with us.' When Joseph awoke he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do and he took his wife to his home.

Commentary:

"While Joseph was thinking of putting her away privately, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream."

God speaks both of us in many ways.
Sometimes it is through the voice of others.
Sometimes it is in silence of restless thoughts.
Sometimes it is through the example of those who practice caring in our own life.

Whenever the means, God calls us to our best selves or to...

Divine Communication Workshop, Inc., 4 Mercury St. Off Hilltop Subdivision, Quezon City, 1119 Tel. & Fax No. 931-0000 e-mail address: info@dcwi.org Website: http://www.dcwi.org

MERALCO EMPLOYEES SPEND NOCHE BUENA AWAY FROM HOME JUST TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

MAKING SURE CHRISTMAS IS BRIGHT

Christmas comes around only once a year, but for 13 years, Nestor Divina of Meralco was spending noche buena away from home to work the night shift and make sure Meralco consumers have uninterrupted electricity – a kind of dedication shared by hundreds of Meralco linemen, supervisors, and call center agents who have to endure loneliness when called to serve on Christmas Eve.

Now the head of Meralco's Alabang Sector, Divina looks back at the last 27 years he has been with Meralco with equal measure of fondness and melancholy as Christmas time nears once more. It is an experience this 59-year-old electrical engineer considers a price for working with the country's largest power distributor and an offering of one's self as well.

"May halong lungkot ang naramdaman ko tuwing sasapit ang Pasko dahil nasasala ko yung mga panahong malayo ako sa pamilya ko, pero masaya rin naman ako sapagkat dahil papasok ako," he says.

Divina recalls the difficult moments when he started spending Christmas Eve away from his family in 1991. "Hindi po sanay ang asawa ko na wala ako sa bahay pag noche buena at mahilig po ang anak ko sa pyrotechnics. Kahit ganun talaga ang ating trabaho at kailangan ang ating serbisyo," he says.

Meralco Senior Vice President and Head of Customer Retail Services & Corporate Marketing and Communications Alfredo S. Panlilio, salutes the company's employees who sacrifice a lot in order to keep power running throughout the Meralco franchise.

"It is our special offering to Meralco's customers during Christmas, and it is our modest way of expressing the spirit of the season which lends more meaning to giving than to receive," he says.

Fifteen-year-veteran Meralco employee, particularly linemen, are no strangers to sacrifice and hard work. In the aftermath of typhoons Ondoy and Milenyo, for instance, many of them risked life and limb to restore electric power immediately. On their own initiative, some even had to join rescue operations and help their fellow Filipinos in need, even if their own homes were inundated.

Such heroic effort was demonstrated by lineman Charlie Peruseo of Meralco's Rizal Sector who left the side of his family to God and decided to heed the call of duty at the height of Ondoy's onslaught.

Uncertain of the whereabouts of his wife, children and parents, he just prayed hard for their safety. While their belongings were lost to the sudden surge of floodwater, Peruseo was thankful none of his loved ones was hurt. He even decided to work overtime since many of his colleagues could not report because of the typhoon's devastation.

This Christmas, while most Filipino families will be sharing their noche buenas at home, there will be hundreds of Meralco employees on duty who will have dinner by themselves while doing the rounds in their area and waiting to respond to any emergency.

Most of them take comfort in the thought that they are able to serve others not only during Christmas. Lineman Ronald Orajay of Pasig Sector said it best – "Ipagbubuhi kong mapag-ibayuhan ang sambayanan at ipagkakaloob ang aking makakaya upang mapanatiling maliwanag ang ating kapaligiran."

For a safe & merry Christmas

Very few are aware of it, but fires and related accidents are common during the Christmas season, making the holiday celebrations somewhat sad for many. But there are several safety precautions Filipinos can observe to make sure they welcome Christmas and the New Year in peace. For a safe Christmas season, Meralco is encouraging its customers and the public to follow these tips:

- Check Christmas lights for frayed or exposed wires. To know if Christmas light wires can still be used, bend the wire and if the insulation cracks, exposing the conductor inside, immediately discard the lights.
- Buy lights and electrical decorations approved by the Bureau of Product Standards (BPS). These products have an ICC sticker in their packaging.
- Indoor lights and decors belong indoors. For outdoor places like gardens, use lights and decors specifically designed for outdoors.
- Replace busted Christmas light bulbs with new bulbs and not with foil or other metallic objects. Make sure you unplug the Christmas lights first before replacing light bulbs or fuses.
- When purchasing an artificial tree, make sure it is labeled as fire-retardant, especially when you intend to decorate it with Christmas lights.
- Be wary of your children playing with or around Christmas lights, since this can lead to electrical shocks or electrocution.

To ensure that Christmas lights remain on and Filipinos enjoy their noche buena with their families, Meralco linemen work round-the-clock

Night or day, Christmas or not, employees of Meralco are on call 24/7 monitoring the entire franchise area and ready to respond to any emergency

The trial: From Senate to Edsa, too

From page A1

prosecution trial was on a much-needed suspension following hours of debate over whether the court should allow the opening of a second envelope that supposedly contained damning evidence against him.

The congressman prosecuting Estrada wanted the envelope's contents revealed but his defense lawyers refused to have it opened, insisting it had nothing to do with the charge that led to his impeachment by the House of Representatives a month earlier.

Senator Judge Orlando pounded his desk, looked in the direction of journalists seated in the adjoining gallery, and said in no one in particular: "Hindi nindahan 'tong envelope na 'yan. Mahihiga lang sila (That envelope will not be opened. They will only be frustrated)."

Deutsche had always been outspoken, so I thought he was just being himself when he made that momentary wrinkle on the face of Hall's dozen contenders as well as local and foreign journalists cramped in an area less than 20 square meters.

Earlier that day, Jan. 16, 2001, Deutsche was heard casting his disapproval of Senate President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. for the latter's obvious preference for the opening of the envelope.

Memory bits

This year's down a size in one's memory. In my case, I remember really only certain images and sounds during the flurry that followed the senator judges' 11-10 vote against the opening of the second envelope.

Deutsche had been proven right.

I remember tempers flaring when Senate Judge Francisco Tatad called for the vote. His move led to the lengthy suspension that had the controlling parties lobbying with the senator judges.

I remember the loud cheering in the gallery when Pimentel announced his resignation as Senate president after voting "no."

I remember the shock and confusion of reporters and librarians when congressmen, prosecutors and private lawyers walked out to see the "no" vote win.

I remember wondering what's-person I should approach for assessment, and then moving around like the proverbial headless chicken, listening to any and all "analysts" interviewed I chanced upon.

Honestly, I missed the part when Senator Judge Franklin Drilon and lawyer Loguecio cried.

I remember retreating to the lawyers' station hall, by then nearly empty except for a few persons including Senator Judge Teofisto Aquino Guingona.

I do not remember her showing.

Some disgruntled civilians, probably members of the civil society groups calling for Estrada's ouster, suddenly appeared in the session hall entrance and heckled her.

And so Drew raised her arms and clapped, jumped and made a face. It was supposed to be her sarcastic reaction to her heckling.

Distracted dinner

Later that night, I had dinner with then Inquirer reporters Juliet Javellonia and Hartley "Jun" Macli of the impeachment coverage team.

That they both lived in Quezon City made the restaurant on Tomas Morato a logical choice.

The two were exchanging insights into what had transpired. I was too exhausted and kept quiet. Clearly, the climax of an issue was lost. (The Chinese call it interesting times.)

Besides, I could barely listen to Javie's analyses. The hustling of home right outside the restaurant was too distracting.

The following day, Jan. 17, 2001, was to have been a grueling race to retrieve from the impassive-looking, caffeine-fueled daily coverage of the impeachment trial.

I was so leave and took up to find rest in the pediatrician for his regular shots. For while waiting in the queue outside the clinic, I got a call from Stella Estrada, editor of the city desk.

"You need to come to work," she said. "The inspectors covering the garbage dump in Tala (Caloocan) need to go all night. I need to organize another team to cover tonight."

"Sis, I'll be there," I said. Of course.

My son and I could have left the hospital earlier if not for the pediatrician who was worried talk about the turn of events.

"Do you think there will be a civil war?" she said.

Like a circus

Early that morning, the stretch of Edsa in Quezon City from Santolan to Ortigas was chaos personified. Coming from Caloocan, I alighted from my mom's van at the foot of the Santolan flyover and walked toward the Edsa Shrine.

The scene was like a circus.

Vendors were offering those literature-like tarpaulins that light up when snapped. There was a commander rock band every several meters providing music for an impromptu street party. People hoisted placards bearing incentives against Estrada and Orosa or the familiar Edsa slogans.

I reached the Edsa Shrine in almost one and a half hours. The floor of the shrine was heavily guarded by seminarians.

It was a marvelous time to leave my press card at home. As expected, they refused to let me sip to get a better vantage point... until another reporter recognized a pro-camo down and vouched for me.

Once up, I tried my best to blend with the crowd. I also eavesdropped shamelessly, hoping to snatch any piece of information that could be used to build up a story.

Too late

There was a man carrying a miniature radio. I smiled and squatted beside her. (If there's one thing I like about civil society gatherings, it's that everyone is so civil and neutral.)

Speaking on radio was Hernando Perez, a former Batangas congressman and one of the private prosecutors in the impeachment trial.

He (Who Should Become Nameless) Secretary revealed that Estrada had contacted the group of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and was now agreeable to opening the second envelope.

For by then, the crowd that had gathered already had it agree there.

Bound

In a few hours, screen Erastus Rocco would be finding interview against Estrada on live television.

Former senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla would confirm his role. Former congresswoman Loi Ejercito, also Estrada's ex-lawyer Estrada.

Actress Isabel Lopez, a former Ms. Philippines Universe would tell the she would have wanted to be with Estrada since we Lacuna Estrada's request, "If only she shared the wealth."

As Perez said, it was too late to open the second envelope.

Eraptions: This one wasn't funny

By Juliet Labog-Javellana
Inq Deed Editor

PEC WEEK ARCHIVES for the Deed.

On July 16, 1999, when my new first-named boss, President Joseph Estrada's briefing, the kitchen of the Deputy Guest House at the Palace had run out of gas. So the President served sandwiches to the rest of the Malacañang reporters.

The scenario was straight out of "Eraptions." It started 5 p.m. phones started ringing in the press working area (PWA) at Malacañan Hall. One by one, our colleagues at the insinuation of the PWA went down.

I didn't realize what was happening. I was still writing my story about the Palace-led ad hoc war that hit the Internet at the start of July.

My partner Martin Marfil found out that we were the only ones left in the press office.

The other reporters had gone to the presidential residence for Estrada's briefing. They were supposed of secrecy so that Martin and I wouldn't find out.

Excluded

When more than an hour, the other reporters returned and started writing their stories. Martin and I labored at our computers monitors. I wondered what scoops they would have the next day.

Malaya reporter Jiji de Vera Valdez was handed her last tape recorder. I listened and took notes.

Later I went to see Press Secretary Ibad Ermita in his office to find out why we had been excluded.

"I don't know. We were just following orders," the soft-spoken Bayan said. "The President instructed us to invite the members of the Malacañang Press Corps and, as relayed to me by [Estrada spokesperson] Secretary [Jay] Ruiz, we were to include the boycotters."

It was not a press conference. Bayan reasoned out. Just an "informal chat" and "interview time."

Gripes re PDI

Estrada had earlier stopped his practice of allowing "ambush" interviews. Asked that afternoon by the other reporters who he was suddenly willing to be interviewed again, he said: "I just wanted to see you."

During the "informal chat" that took nearly two hours, Estrada aired his gripes against the Inquirer and supposedly inspired my boss to choose his subsequent words.

He justified our exclusion later in a radio interview, saying he just didn't want to have two media with the boycotters.

But Ibad was the least of our concerns (although these was something to be said about the feelers at the President's house).

Estrada loved his words and entertained friends, serving his favorite dishes like bistek, sapasang fatso, pochero and bacalao. But he had denied that P40 million was spent to refurbish the kitchen with state-of-the-art Italian and German fixtures.

Apparently again, a resident of Canada who was appointed Estrada's chief of staff, famously talked about policy decisions made during drinking sessions that lasted until 4 a.m.

"It's the best thing working for me because at 4 o'clock in the morning, I can [be only sober] enough to drive home. And if [the power] to Canada, I will be [the designated driver]; I will be the one taking them to their beds and so on," Lagman said in a Manila Overseas Press Club forum in March 2000.

There were his last words as a Palace official because he was shortly sent back to Canada. ("The one who died [was was born] out of Malacañang 18 months later.)

The tensions was banned from three more Estrada press briefings between July and August 1999.

The new months were like a game of who blinked first.

The Palace reporters persisted, and Estrada continued hitting the newspapers. But the tension had poetry weapons—Estrada's stubborn silence, assailant rumors, loyal stakeholders and diehard readers who stayed the course.

If it turned out to be an epic battle, I was certain we wouldn't have missed it nearly.

In the end, Estrada didn't last as long as the rest of Malacañang.

Security detail

On my way home one night from the Palace, a uniformed man talked me and I asked my husband to be on the lookout for my son. If I was really not on the road were tailgating.

I saw the men laughing as they followed us. We had Stella as we received the Naguilan entrance. I went to the press office, told the staff about the incident, and called home.

My husband, Nicholas didn't hear us from

The real loser, winner in ad boycott

From page A1

branded by no less than President Joseph Estrada, who raged at the newspaper's stance of graft involving him, his relatives and his cronies.

Visit my President at once ... Palakasin mo ang loob mo [The President is mad at the Inquirer ... He'll bring you to your knees]," a businessman close to Estrada told PDI president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez as the buyouts teetered on the brink.

It was comfortable days for 13 years after the Marcos dictatorship was toppled in the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution, another Philippine leader would have the guts to make what Ellie called harassment, but apparently irritated demand set a newspaper for families out on edge.

And that was how, in the post-Edsa era, President Estrada became the most curious minister in the country's press freedom.

'Unwitting godfather'

Before he tried to squash the buyouts, Estrada first pounced on the much smaller Manila Times. In April of that fateful year he leafed the newspaper (circulation 30,000) and was seeing a front-page apology in connection with its banner story that he had moved to an "unwitting money" (godfather) to an allegedly anomalous P200 million power contract.

The newspaper quickly saved its—thanks to the President's P10.1 million libel suit against the newspaper and the P693.92 billion tax assessment over the Manila Times owner, tycoon Antonio Tuvera—Estrada ally Mamerto Escudero told his newspaper in Malolos, an extremely Estrada county swamped by 326,000 votes for making Bigoti campaign posters, streamers and vending fans.

Interpreted by his anyone with Manila Times, Estrada's penchant for his best to all our be the favorite, the No. 1 issue then ratcheted circulation of 200,000. He endorsed the power of the presidency, coupled with his high popularity rating, would again trump the power of the press.

Dinner with producers

During a Palace dinner that the co-error hosted for movie producers on July 8, Estrada breathlessly told them that he had been terribly unfair to him. He then made the producers an offer they couldn't refuse. If they would pull out their ads from the newspaper, he would grant their request for tax incentives. The producers agreed.

"We attack on press freedom," then-Julius Arroyo demanded Estrada's deal with the producers when he became broke. On cue, on the movie ad buyers' Sen. Raul Roco also raised the alarm. "When government advertisers become a particular newspaper a critical, you're not going against the newspaper. You're going against freedom of the press."

Notwithstanding the outrage stoked by other lawmakers, with Estrada's backing, government and ordinary citizens, these government businessmen—Land Bank of the Philippines, Philippine National Bank and Social Security System—also canceled their ad placements in the buyouts.

By significant, Palace officials ambivalent in the buyouts that big businessmen who had dealings with Malacañang were likewise being urged to advertise elsewhere.

Terrified

By the end of July half of the buyouts's top 10 advertisers had abandoned the newspaper.

A few advertisers, like the Ayala group of companies and Manila Electric, stood their ground and provided a vital lifeline in the buyouts during the crisis. But many were terrified at Malacañang's wrath and stayed away in the succeeding months.

One top CEO, for instance, was horrified to learn his company was being pressured to pull its ads from the Inquirer. Another CEO, who feared the President would ruin his business if he refused, had to be persuaded by his wife to withdraw the ads.

Even the Philippine Stock Exchange, which had already been pitched in advance, felt bogged family Prieto-Romualdez to run the ad and offered to pay the cost of printing the entire section. She obliged him.

Many of the newspaper's long-time clients also pleaded for understanding, citing pressure from the Palace and implicit threats to their businesses.

Compression expanded over the buyouts's multitude and equal Estrada's ire.

'We will fight'

"Let us help you ease your pain ... Name your price," a businessman associated with a recent close to Estrada told family Romualdez. (He promised to relay his message to her mother, PDI chair Marixi Rufino Prieto, and other family members who held the controlling stake in the newspaper.

"We will fight," he ordered the 1988 co-founder ejected her to close on the PDI and its directors. When the vast majority left empty-handed, legal suits followed. A sexy matter filed a P60-million libel suit against the buyouts. In September, a retired CJP law professor filed a criminal complaint against 11 buyouts editors and officers for allegedly disgusting the presidency, combining terrorism acts and inciting to sedition.

Acts conduct drew condemnation from international and local media watchdogs. Malacañang's response: It's the right to a dead penalty. At a business forum, Press Secretary Ricky Reyes explained the President was not an enemy of press freedom but was "simply irritated" as one newspaper Estrada is the victim, not the villain, in the case.

"Sorry, Mr. President, but pulling out ads is about as effective in promoting good journalism as pulling and lacerating the press," buyouts said in an editorial. "If the ads are about to press, Estrada should 'threaten' the publication, instead of shooting their moves to punish critics like the buyouts," the organization suggested.

Proactive approach

Taking a proactive, inside-out approach to Estrada's charges of malicious and irresponsible journalism, family Romualdez told late-night sessions with editors to review procedures, processes and practices on how the newspaper performs its mandate to serve the news. The result was the buyouts Manual of Editorial Policies that united the newspaper's standards on accuracy, objectivity and fairness.

And while Estrada and his cronies wined and dined in Malacañang, buyouts publisher Isagani M. Yambot spent the night explaining the newspaper's stand in TV talk shows and various fora.

Into the second month of the boycott, the embattled buyouts managed to keep afloat with tens of thousands of heartwarming letters sent via fax, e-mail and mail mainly by ordinary readers and non-readers alike from here and abroad. "Fight on; don't surrender" was the message in their correspondence.

Never had the buyouts seen such massive outpouring of support for a free press.

Protracted standoff

When Estrada called for a one-on-one huddle with the buyouts had forgiven and with the editorial stand, refusing widespread outrage.

On Aug. 28, the PDI carried and 1,000 other demonstrators from various sectors rallied in Edsa Shrine to denounce the buyouts crisis. The buyouts's courageous stand drew the loudest applause during the protest against Chavit Singson, corruption and threats to press freedom.

The quick fight that Estrada had anticipated was coming was unprecedented, totally standoff. As the buyouts's advertisers dipped, Estrada's popularity sagging also plunged.

From a high of 67 percent in March, the President's net satisfaction rating tumbled to 28 percent in October, according to Pulse Asia.

Even before his popularity rating slumped to an all-time low of 5 percent in December, the President decided to cut his losses and mend her pose. He sent word he was willing to sit down with buyouts editors.

Inside the lion's den

After negotiation, Sandy Romualdez, Letty Magsanoc and Yambot—all buyouts—met the President one dinner at the house of his son, then San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, in the last week of November. The meeting at Greenhills subdivision was arranged by Raymond Burgos, an Inquirer reporter who had joined the Estrada administration and became the publisher of the opposition's Journal group.

The President brought with him Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon Jr., Finance Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, Press Secretary Reyes and Burgos. Flanked by Siazon and Burgos, Estrada sat at the center of the table across Letty Magsanoc-Ocampo on her left and Prieto on her right.

After the waiters from Le Jardin had cleared the table of the dinner, the President—chief genially thanked his host. She went off the meeting to get us to the main item on the agenda.

Mr. President, before we do, asked to make here, there were some questions which we thought would come out of this meeting. But others said: Why don't we listen to what the President will say?" I said in Filipino. "Mr. President, we're here to listen. What is your answer against the buyouts?"

An unusually quiet fell on the six. "To this question, I will be very blunt," Estrada asked, glancing at Prieto, who nodded.

The showdown

Estrada fixed some "If that's the case, you must to that you drag down my family into all sorts of controversy," he said in Filipino. He stood an buyouts story about his son Jude, who flew his friends on the presidential jet to Cagayan de Oro for some good time and left behind unpaid bills. "Wala akong pera sa bulsa ko [I have no son who is a scoundrel]," he said.

Estrada also lectured Rufino Prieto for a story linking his mistress, Laarni Enriquez, and his cronies, Celia Epresto de Castro, to a multimillion-peso bank contract in the Department of Education. "You were accompanied the story with a photo of Laarni in her shorts ... What if her children saw the photo?" he said.

The editor in chief pointed out that the photo, which was taken when Laarni was still in showbiz, came out in Philippine Star, not the buyouts.

Then Estrada told Prieto drawing a fly on his face? Estrada fumed. The editor in chief replied that the photo appeared in Manila Times.

Unexpected happened

"Parehu lang 'yan [It's the same thing]," Estrada said. "If a justice in Malacañang read those news reports and saw these photos, he would lose respect for the President."

He continued his harangue on what he considered was unnecessary reporting by the buyouts, with the editor in chief educating him from time to time. The meeting wasn't getting any where.

I spelled out the buyouts position. "Mr. President, all we can promise you is accuracy, balance and fairness. As for members of your family, we have set up a hotline to Press Secretary Rod Reyes so he can give us their side before we publish stories about them."

Estrada stared at me, and the unexpected happened. "Ganun naman pala, eh (Well, that's how it shall be here)," he exhausted, visibly pleased with himself that he had gotten his message across and assured what he must have felt was a big concession from the buyouts.

The President dropped the accusations against and began wooing family Romualdez about how Malacañang would treat the buyouts that, according to Homer prosecutors, would prove that Estrada had amassed P3.2 billion in Jose Velarde account with by vitalde. (Story on Page A1.)

The deal aborted, franchise of Channel 4 and General Manuel Roxas Communications Corp. (GMA) call for people power. "Stay here until evil is conquered by good," Ellie exhorted the people during Mass in the Edsa Shrine on Jan. 17.

Two days later, the military withdrew its support from the Estrada presidency. Half of the Cabinet also resigned. Soldiers rushed to the wind.

'Goodbye, Erap'

At noon of Jan. 20, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. swore in Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the 14th President of the Republic.

Now until a half years short of his six-year term, Estrada limped out of Malacañang at 2:30 p.m. "Goodbye, Erap" read the lion one headline of the buyouts extra.

Had Alfred Ellis been at the press corridor that day he would have said of the man who had been ejected with cries of by biggest popular voice in Philippine history but lose his mandate: I have continued, here human.

ERAP FREEDOM mastermind huddle up at the Edsa Shrine on Edsa and Bridges following the collapse of Joseph Estrada's impeachment trial. (INQUIRER FILE)

THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION People power rallies to the streets once more and declare Joseph Estrada guilty in the impeachment trial of the ex-hero. (INQUIRER FILE)

Welcome the world's first tabl

PLDT

TELPAD

It's your landline reinvented.

Powered by android™

et landline into your home.

- Plans start at 1MB up to 1 mbps
- Current myDSL subscribers can add as low as P300 to avail of a VoIP plan and get a speed upgrade of at least 2 mbps.

call your PLDT unit now! Call 171

or visit us online through www.pldthome.com

INQUIRER

OPINION

Twisted faith

IT WAS supposed to be a showcase of cooperation and peace. The 15-day Christmas ceasefire agreed on by the government and the communist New People's Army was to start at 12:01 a.m. on Dec. 16, 2010 and continue up to 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 3, 2011. Everyone was looking forward to a quiet holiday season, with the combatants hopefully back home with their families and loved ones instead of out in the field, exchanging fire.

EDITORIAL

But on Dec. 14, just two days before the ceasefire was to take effect, NPA insurgents attacked a 12-man column of Philippine Army soldiers in the town of Las Navas, Northern Samar, killing 10 of them and a 9-year-old bystander. The soldiers, part of the 62nd Infantry Battalion, were returning to their base of operations and were getting ready to observe the Christmas ceasefire when they were ambushed by some 40 NPA rebels.

"This is a very unfortunate event, especially this Christmas season. This is the sacrifice that our soldiers take in pursuit of peace in the Visayas," Lt. Gen. Ralph Villanueva said.

The soldiers are going to be returned to their families in a Christmas homecoming that nobody wanted.

The Communist Party of the Philippines, the mother organization of the NPA, justified the attack as "a legitimate act of war carried out in self-defense in response to an active enemy offensive operation." But based on latest reports from the field, it appears that the encounter took some preparations (e.g., landmines were planted) and was initiated by the NPA rebels.

The claim that "Samar command" says, that's how the CPP described it in a statement e-mailed to media—was made before the ceasefire took effect is an excuse for it; such an apparent cosmetic fig leaf is easy to expose for the cynicism it is. And because it was done just before the ceasefire started, the attack could only be an act of tactical and political treachery—and cunning. It could only be considered a treacherous act.

As a gesture of good faith, the CPP and NPA should have seen to it that with the approaching ceasefire and the peace talks about to be revived, their armed elements would avoid a firefight with government troops instead of preparing for one last attack. No matter how the CPP-NPA try to spin it, the Samar ambush was an act of bad faith. By its own doing, the CPP-NPA has put to question its trustworthiness as the bargaining table.

Now, as we mourn and honor the brave soldiers who fell in that treachery, the government must weigh the relative value of the CPP-NPA's word.

"The Philippine government would like to emphasize that in spite of this incident, and with full recognition and appreciation of the discipline and commitment of our security forces, we remain steadfast in our commitment to honor the agreed upon suspension of military operations," Secretary Teresita Quintos Deles, presidential adviser on the peace process, said.

Meanwhile, the Army is left in a precarious position of having to abide by the terms of the ceasefire, fully knowing that the NPA can attack any time in connection with the agreement. On the other hand, it cannot pursue the NPA rebels who killed the 10 soldiers and the young bay last Dec. 14 because such an action would be in violation of the ceasefire that began Dec. 16.

The CPP-NPA needs to clean up its act. If it wants credibility, it must police its own ranks and ensure that there would be no further attacks during the truce to show it can control its ranks and keep its word. Otherwise, the Samar ambush will remain an act of betrayal, and its word will mean less than nothing when time comes to talk of peace and an end to war, regardless of what time of the year it is.

Jacinto

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

NATIONAL ARTIST and poet Virgilio Almario, aka Rio Alma, spent all morning of Wednesday, Dec. 15, trying frantically to remind classes it's the 150th birthday of Emilio Jacinto. The just-released, barely-out-of-his-tomes, joined the Katipunan when he was nothing more than a bandbol, surfaced in "Bonifacio," and just to prove almost single-handedly the revolutionary movement's newspaper Kalayaan. Though they may not know his name, grade school pupils today may still recognize the face of this hero who probably showed part of his blood bordered with a layer of well-combed hair.

Other than that he was Andres Bonifacio's brain trust, the one who taught by his side, little else is known of this Tondo-born Kagalanon who used to the town's party "Pinglisi" (Mother of Bad). The Supremo, who was 12 years older, called him the "Brain of the Katipunan." A letter Bonifacio wrote to Jacinto, dated April 24, 1897, one month after the fateful Tejeros assembly, might have been among the Supremo's last. He wrote it just three days before his secret but written by Emilio Aguinaldo's forces, and 16 days before his execution.

In that letter, the beleaguered leader poured out his grievances after the stunning humiliation he suffered at Tejeros. Perhaps deeply his isolation in Cavite, Bonifacio planned to return to Manila to consolidate his forces. This was when he felt most insecure in his leadership among the plebeians he had originally recruited into the secret society. He particularly needed to secure the full trust of the young Jacinto by providing him a personal account of what happened in Cavite and the people who betrayed him. One has to take this letter in the light of the circumstances in the time. I'm suffering here. I have boundless of pain one of that letter:

"One infuriating piece of news I encountered is to you is about the branders of the leaders of Magdalo who had acceded to the Spanish offer of amnesty. These are ministers of the Daniel Tirona, Minister of Interior Ano del aire. Clearly, he did not trust Aguinaldo: he might have thought he was very much a part of the Magdalo conspirers that ousted him as head of the revolution. However, Bonifacio appeared to cling to the belief that the whole sordid episode was purely a Magdalo scheme. He failed to see that the Magdalenes group was very much an integral part of the new government and readily accepted Aguinaldo's leadership.

As things turned out, Bonifacio never made it back to Manila. On the night of the Spanish assault on the Katipunan's stronghold in Cavite, he was cited and executed for sedition by the Aguinaldo-led revolutionary government. Although Aguinaldo commuted the death sentence to indefinite exile as soon as it was promulgated, his order failed to stop the Supremo's execution.

We don't even how Jacinto took the Supremo's account of the events that transpired in Cavite, or even more, Bonifacio's death at the hands of fellow revolutionaries. He appeared to have fled to the mountains after the signing of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato, rebelling, like many leaders of the revolution, to lay down their arms. In 1898, following Aguinaldo's return from exile, and the subsequent declaration of independence at Kawit, Apolinario Mabini, then adviser to Aguinaldo, wrote to Jacinto, asking him to "come down from the mountains and help us in the consolidation of the government." I quote from Cesar Ileto's work on Mabini: "Jacinto was somewhat cautious about this return to the lowlands; he was fearful lest his close associations with Bonifacio might be counted against him." Jacinto never went down to Bulacan; he died of a fever on April 16, 1899 in the age of 23.

In our corporate households, Jacinto's memory lives on as a little go-lucked Pacino," the previous granddaughter that the disaster and the Davids share and love quite.

---

public.free@gmail.com

Poverty

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THE STORY a told about a little boy who rushed back to the church and gave P100 to the priest who just celebrated the Sunday Mass. When the priest asked him why he, the kid said: "As we were going out of the church, I heard my father say that you are such a poor preacher."

In today's Gospel (Mt. 11: 2-11), we hear about the poor conditions that surrounded the birth of Jesus Christ. Bureaucratic ineptitude certainly on the part of Mary who was found with child before she and Joseph lived together, and on the part of Joseph to whom she was betrothed and who contemplated on divorcing her. From the very start, everything was shrouded by human uncertainty. What made it all possible? Faith and obedience to God's plan.

The first Christmas was poor—and simple. It was not a "Merry" Christmas, but a "Holy" Christmas. It was poor, but filled with love much love, joy and peace. Remember, it is in not poverty, more than in our abundance, that we really experience the Divine.

I always try to find time to stop and meditate before our "before" (earlier) scene: I do the Ministry Hours, and then remind myself why I am doing the things I am doing, especially this Advent season. Soaked in God's love, I realize that all the things I do mean nothing at all if I do not have love in my heart.

Did you notice that many malls have the latter as part of their Christmas decorations? That's fine, except that, for some people, it's just that—a decoration. People don't even notice it or care to stop by. Why? Maybe, they do not have the time or because they have "more important" things to do. At Christmas, let's appreciate, please focus on the "nativity scene" and just concede on the "nativity scene."

Someone once said that the way you spend Christmas is far more important than how much you spend during Christmas. Let us get out of the rushed-up! the money makes or mistakes Christmas. Christmas is not in the pocket. Christmas is in the heart.

Who is poor at Christmas? Poor are the people who have all the trimmings of Christmas, but do not know or appreciate the Celebrant of Christmas. Poor are they who have become enhanced with all that pre-Christmas activities, and do not have peace in their hearts and in their homes at Christmas. Poor are those who exude a feeling, but do not have faith in all the Christmas.

Christmas lights and decorations are nice, but what about embarking on the "pause" (Christmas start) being in a shanty somewhere, in a prepare, or a unit that somehow shows the happiness and dreams of the least, the least and the last among us. As long as we elect to unfolding in our hearts, then Christmas, with its message of hope and love, is alive. Keep dreaming. Keep hoping. Keep believing!

ADMI, the radio network of MBC-CBN, recently launched the "Kindi Bulay" Program. With this undertaking, *ADMI* station launch on the doors of the homes of the poor in Metro Manila, and give many persons and gifts to spread Christmas cheer. Let us do our own "kindi bulay" in our neighborhood, in the offices we go to, even in doing something with the less privileged, especially at Christmas.

"Emmanuel" which means "God is with us" is a powerful message. Infant with so much hope, for in who's expectant poverty is, relentless from. People who are poor materially, emotionally or spiritually, but who, nevertheless in the fact that God is not a distant, unmoving God, but a God who got involved, and is in love with us! May we all make His presence felt. Make Christmas happen at least to one person aside from yourself: then you have become a living "Emmanuel."

For us Filipinos, it is so important to be with our loved ones especially at Christmas. Thousands of build-buyers come home, patiently waiting in long lines at the airport, buying trolls, and carrying loaded, just to be home. They are longing to be with their loved ones and get together for Christmas. Why we are leave on the Lord in our sessions and get together this Christmas.

Please remember that Christmas is the time for celebrations, but it is also the time for solidarity with those who are physically, emotionally and spiritually poor. Share. Yes, share your time, your talent and your treasures.

One more value in Christmas 2010? Someone once said that Christmas is forgiveness to your enemies, tolerance to your opponents, affection to your loved ones, honesty to your clients, service to people, generosity to the needy, charity toward all, and gratitude to the Lord. Let us pray for giving as a life of hopeful and meaningful!

Someone also said that any of the best ways to worship God is simply to be happy. Wishing you all a peaceful, love-filled, happy and worshipful Christmas!

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, remind me that my helplessness and poverty, you are especially with me. Amen.

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD, is the president of the University of Batangas. Feedback may be sent to his e-mail address: frjerryorbos@yahoo.com

Energy diversification

WASHINGTON—Our energy diversification is prudent, too. That is why the Energy Department has recommended reevaluation of a federal policy that now discourages construction of nuclear power plants.

FOREIGN COMMENT

A first step in that move should be establishing a national nuclear waste repository. Without it, nuclear waste will remain a national security and environmental concern.

But there are those in government ... who will not admit that Plano for a repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada, has been blocked ...

The Yucca Mountain plan appears to be a good one—and desirable pursued. A nuclear waste repository is needed now, and may become more important in the future.

The Journal (Martinsburg, West Virginia)

Publisher Isaac Tourot
Editor in Chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc
Managing Editor Lisa Ito A. Molave
Associate Editor Armando L. Doronila
Opinion Editor Juan V. Mercado
Deputy Editors Antonio T. Bautista Jr. • Chief, Inquirer Core Operations Hazel B. Pulido
Chief, News Desk Cielo Rodolfo R. Alcazar Sto.
Supervising Editors Philamer B. Bocobo Jr.
Senior Desk Editor Jose P. Tumbaga Jr.
Editorial Consultant Antonio Zumel
Chief Photographer Ismael D. Zamora
Art & Design Chief Artist Lisa F. A. Villamor
Board Chairman Hans H. Pedro
President Alejandro Pedro Roman III
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Rosario R. Pedro
Vice President for Advertising Pedro R. Olaguer
Vice President for Info Tech and Production Gary E. Lim
Vice President for Finance Jose M. Villareal
AVP for Circulation Ricardo Andres R. Gonzalez IV
Corporate Affairs Manager Corina R. Kalaw

© Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

After the defeat, what now?

WITH DUE RESPECT

Antonio U. Pangalangan

It THE Supreme Court ahead of the week? May did it deregulate the Philippine Truth Commission (PTC)? Why are conducted motions underscoring our elected President's promise to throw our corruption and to punish the perpetrators during the past regime? So readers asked me after the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional Executive Order No. 1 (EO 1) and thereby ended the PTC. (Biraogo v. PTC, Dec. 7, 2016).

Good and maxim. President Aquino himself was sure. He lambasted "those pretending" to be deaf and blind, saying, "while I am here, I wouldn't allow that Filipino would be up-stymied." Even more emphatic was Solicitor General Jose Anselmo Calida who lowered the decibel to a "payment of gratitude" by the justices appointed by former President Benigno Simeon Aquino Sr.

To the fans, the Court's 10-page decision, penned by Justice Jose Catral Mendoza, is unpersuasive. It renders results: "Of all the branches of the government, it is the judiciary which is most interested in knowing the truth and it is will not allow itself to be a hindrance or obstacle to its attainment. It must however be emphasized that the search for the truth must be conducted in constitutional bounds..."

The 68-page commentary of Justice Arturo D. Brion was more explicit. It argues that while the goal of such finding may be laudable, the means envisioned to achieve it—the opening of the PTC's hearings to full media glare—are not only unnecessary, but also violative of the rights of witnesses. The majority will allegedly make it difficult for the Ombudsman and the courts to render judgment contrary to the public biases generated by unfounded media.

In his 10-page dissent, Justice Maria Lourdes P. A. Sereno argues that the PTC is necessary "to convey a good view of the Filipino people." She asserts that it could give citizens some public assurance "that both her seat in the executive and the judiciary discharge their duties."

Let's explore. I will no longer repeat the arguments per said out the Court's decision. They have already been aired extensively during the last 20 days. I believe the central questions after this debate, when over? To me mind, Ifilay has four major options.

First, file a motion for reconsideration as proposed by Calida. Considering the votes of the Court of 10-5 and the necessity by which the ponencia defeated the issues in their voluminous opinions I wonder a continued week of fifth paper). It will be the height of folly to expect a reversal. I do not think anyone can put any more arguments than those so hallowed by votes in the en banc decision.

The second option is to follow the ponencia's suggestion: "a revision of the executive issuance" to transfer the PTC to investigate into the "earlier jaw administration" with "reasonable jurisdictional parameters." Again, I think this will be difficult to execute the PTC but that by coupling out the one "during the past regime," EO 1 violated the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

This suggestion is iffy since only three justices concurred unqualifiedly with the power. The six other members of the majority of 10 concurred only "in the result." They opine that EO 1 is unconstitutional not only because of its violation of the equal protection clause but also because the President had no power to create "an independent body."

Justice Sereno—take the ponencia's advice a "red herring" because "a drafting of the decision and votes does not measure the presentation issue or issuing on the Arroyo administration, then the answer is much more again to strike it down." Senior Associate Justice Bienvido Reyes argues that if the power is merely assumed to include all prior administrations, it should not have invalidated the entire EO 1 since "the remaining portions can stand on their own" as valid executive issuances.

Invitation for PCGG. What is the third option proposed by solicitor impeach the 15 justices who dismissed the PTC. What quickly shot this down because a will erode his equally important work of presidential succession. "I am not going to engage in impeachments such as an impeachment case, our attention and focus will be diverted. There will be many less opportunities," he explained.

I agree with the President but for a different reason. I do not think justice should be in arena-battle politics and merely for venting allegedly wrong decisions. After all, in our democracy there are the ultimate arbiters of what is legal and what is not. As US Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson once wrote, "We are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible because we are final."

The fourth and I think the best option is to use the Presidential Commission on Good Governance (PCGG) in running the gridlock. Under the law, the PCGG could investigate "such cases of graft and corruption as the President may assign to it" and "prosecute the same." (EO 1, Sec. 3).

Over the years, the Supreme Court has repeatedly upheld PCGG's constitutionality. Even Chief Justice Maria C. Cotton concedes in an en banc ruling "under the premises enshrined and contemplated in the Constitution, the PCGG was created by Proclamation No. 1 and Executive Order No. 1 to assist the President in the performance of her legislative powers..."

In his dissent, former director T. Lopez disagrees that, by striking down EO 1, the Court's majority of 10 "cripples the hopes of the long-suffering Filipino people for truth and justice and the rightful return of government." I think Palace could revive such hopes by reworking and directing the PCGG in order over the botched mission of the Philippine Truth Commission.

Comments are welcome at and facebook.com

Manifest

METHOD TO MADNESS

Babaylan Evangelista

PH DELETE in free speech and in liberty for as long as the speech coincides with government purposes, and the liberty is determined by government's will. When a dissident speak against his government, to find the cited on its independent judiciaries and arbitrary commissions, then must should be called a criminal. He belongs in jails and in labor camps, deserving of no less than separation from wife and family, isolation from friends who support his aspirations.

Those who would call this state a free are cold enemies of the truth.

Pit holder than human rights are a western concept, imposed by capitalist drones, who do not understand that the ever wind blows stronger than the west. Human rights are secondary to peace loyalty, they are nice for all. Let Hanna release us Aung San Suu Kyis, let the Germans applaud their Ele Weisels, let Asian minorities be dead and out west.

We are the Republic of the Philippines, stronghold of democracy, protector of the free, the brightest light in the long dark night of democracy.

We stand with truth. We stand with freedom. We stand with China.

* * *

On Dec. 10, 2010, as the world celebrated Human Rights Week, and the Aquino government made its leap for human rights with its call for the release of the alleged communists which became as the Morong 43, the Philippines ruled with the People's Republic of China as the bulwark of this year's awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize.

This year's Peace Prize was awarded to jailed democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo, currently serving an 11-year prison sentence for "subverting state power."

Liu Xiaobo was once a professor in Beijing Normal University, before he was ousted from teaching. In 1989, he was present during the massacre of protesters in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. He served a two-year prison sentence. Although he had hoped, presumably, to end the era democracy then had started during down the army He was sent as he awakened in a labor camp in 1996 for three years, after speaking out about China's one-party politics of crimes.

He was jailed again for writing Charter 08, a document he wrote with the support of scholars, artists, lawyers and activists. Charter 08 was a plea for a new constitution in China, an independent judiciary and freedom of expression. He disappeared two days before its publication. It took the Chinese authorities a full month to admit he was in their custody. He was tried and sentenced to 11 years in jail on Dec. 25, 2009.

The Nobel committee described Liu Xiaobo as "the foremost symbol" of the human rights struggle in China.

According to China, his struggle is necessary.

"He will not change because of some wind blowing the grass and because of the interference of some dictator who are anti-China," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said.

* * *

In fact, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo stressed there was a scheduling conflict. He said it was not a Philippine boycott, that "boycott is too strong a word."

Then Presidente Aquino maintained that the country must pull back from the Nobel ceremony for the sake of technical differences, as in the case of the U.S. which still insists on death row for drug trafficking—and because extremists have been arrested because of the Manila hostage crisis debacle.

And so Sen. Juan Antonio praises the President for his courage and his foresight. Antonio, who since the Aug. 23 hostage fiasco has stood so much about the image of the Philippines in the international community, he has no time to be stalling to suspend free speech for the sake of "being seen as a good light," now suddenly claims the international community is in defense of human rights and free speech. Now he speaks of universal sovereignty and rights, as if Mr. Aquino's war of support to China had not already compromised this nation's sovereign will in its claim in support of free speech.

This is not a question of sovereignty—to claim freedom from the West, while slapping on the shackles of the East. According to the President, the Philippines was seeking "distance" of the hostage loss to unite China.

"It's my call," he says. "We've had strained relations because of the thing. I don't want to be a punching bag to many other things. My interest has to be first with the Filipinos."

It is a difficult situation the President finds himself facing. Because of failures in leadership during and after Aug. 23, both by himself and the people beneath him, the Philippines finds itself in dire straits with the world's second largest economy. It is a position that puts the rights of the five survivors with the death penalty, a heartless undertaking...along millionaires is not, they are subject to execution, a punishment long outlawed in the Philippines.

"I don't think it behooves the Philippines to explain exactly or examine its actions," said the President. "We are a sovereign country."

It does behoove the President to explain, not necessarily to the international community, but to the nation, why a knee-handed China can pound away at his defense of human rights. It is not a simple thing, as I have today is already using dear because so justify the "offenses," claiming that it "fully respects the rule of law" when the justices that are stop the decision of the Nobel Committee" and that "the center case of human rights is a western mental as universal imperative. Liu Xiaobo's story is the story of many countrymen and countless couples in the shoulder of the previous regime, as would on him is an assault on the rights of all citizens.

What stops this country from giving away the Sereno's island by island. If China decides it has not reached effective? Do we sign away many agreements, lifted off liberal leases old, pull back from Borneo and the Recess? Do we refuse to sign human rights treaties? Is it a slippery slope, a place where the foreign secretary cannot claim that the Philippines remains "close and consistent on its fight for human rights" as it merely demands its own rights?

This is when the government must acknowledge that a person remains a simple symbolic for issues of development it cannot be more or less than what it is. This is what it means: we believe in truth, and liberty, and the freedom to speak...unless China says we don't.

Four sisters and a 'bakla'

AT LARGE

Alexa Jimenez-Davide

"SHOWGIRL SISTERS" turns out as much to "introduce" the four leggies women to the Filipino public as much as to sell the story of their transformation...from largely peasant figures (until the unexpected success of Vanessa) to the country's renowned entrepreneurs, and, in truth case, even to making the jump from being the "favorite bagets" to "Official Wedding Singer," the sibling called on to represent the family "when no one else is available."

In the style of Pinky Aquino-abellahotelgirl of the idea of casting our sixth-a-book on the limited days of the campaign as seen through their eyes when TV cameras called to ask others they could interview. Or, perhaps, it was a contemporary Irish family that sprang from the economic trends and bunch of volunteers. But what began as a press to document the youthful campaign materials soon blossomed into a collection of memoir, solidify the stories of each, and "whatever happens, you'll be happy with that mother's dreadful calmness into their brother's predicament and resolution.

Many cultural stories have previously seen print or highlighted on TV moments, has garnered regards on many book shelves of everywhere they went, hoping that a book very public and intensely personal.

There is, for instance, Bello's account of how all four of them jumped up on May, sharing a cot with him under way to the residence of his Bedel Mansion, where each of them were positioned right beside Arroyo to dissuade her from running for president.

Pinky on the other hand, recounts how, in the midst, looking up to her brother's encouragement of the campaign, how she "was in denial" of her headaches that got worse as the "climax" grew. But when Her finally declared his intentions to run, rumors Pinky, the headaches disappeared "because then I knew it was already official—there was no turning back."

* * *

A **HALIM** reunion for their assignments and **eventual endorse of Noynoy's candidacy, the** sisters write, was the overwhelming response from the public wherever they went. Indeed, crowds welcomed them and people received

60,000 people might had most wondrous and sensational in the book "God Loves Bakla: My Life in the Closet" the part where Bertrand Ahipeta details his encounters with assistant presidential candidate Jejomar Binay in the streets of Tangub and Plaza Pride. And romantic, teasing after all

Manifesto

PH DELETE in free speech and in liberty for as long as the speech coincides with government purposes, and the liberty is determined by government's will. When a dissident speak against his government, to find the cited on its independent judiciaries and arbitrary commissions, then must should be called a criminal. He belongs in jails and in labor camps, deserving of no less than separation from wife and family, isolation from friends who support his aspirations.

Those who would call this state a free are cold enemies of the truth.

Pit holder than human rights are a western concept, imposed by capitalist drones, who do not understand that the ever wind blows stronger than the west. Human rights are secondary to peace loyalty, they are nice for all. Let Hanna release us Aung San Suu Kyis, let the Germans applaud their Ele Weisels, let Asian minorities be dead and out west.

We are the Republic of the Philippines, stronghold of democracy, protector of the free, the brightest light in the long dark night of democracy.

We stand with truth. We stand with freedom. We stand with China.

* * *

On Dec. 10, 2010, as the world celebrated Human Rights Week, and the Aquino government made its leap for human rights with its call for the release of the alleged communists which became as the Morong 43, the Philippines ruled with the People's Republic of China as the bulwark of this year's awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize.

This year's Peace Prize was awarded to jailed democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo, currently serving an 11-year prison sentence for "subverting state power."

Liu Xiaobo was once a professor in Beijing Normal University, before he was ousted from teaching. In 1989, he was present during the massacre of protesters in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. He served a two-year prison sentence. Although he had hoped, presumably, to end the era democracy then had started during down the army He was sent as he awakened in a labor camp in 1996 for three years, after speaking out about China's one-party politics of crimes.

He was jailed again for writing Charter 08, a document he wrote with the support of scholars, artists, lawyers and activists. Charter 08 was a plea for a new constitution in China, an independent judiciary and freedom of expression. He disappeared two days before its publication. It took the Chinese authorities a full month to admit he was in their custody. He was tried and sentenced to 11 years in jail on Dec. 25, 2009.

The Nobel committee described Liu Xiaobo as "the foremost symbol" of the human rights struggle in China.

According to China, his struggle is necessary.

"He will not change because of some wind blowing the grass and because of the interference of some dictator who are anti-China," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu said.

* * *

In fact, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo stressed there was a scheduling conflict. He said it was not a Philippine boycott, that "boycott is too strong a word."

Then Presidente Aquino maintained that the country must pull back from the Nobel ceremony for the sake of technical differences, as in the case of the U.S. which still insists on death row for drug trafficking...and because extremists have been arrested because of the Manila hostage crisis debacle.

And so Sen. Juan Antonio praises the President for his courage and his foresight. Antonio, who since the Aug. 23 hostage fiasco has stood so much about the image of the Philippines in the international community, he has no time to be stalling to suspend free speech for the sake of "being seen as a good light," now suddenly claims the international community is in defense of human rights and free speech. Now he speaks of universal sovereignty and rights, as if Mr. Aquino's war of support to China had not already compromised this nation's sovereign will in its claim in support of free speech.

This is not a question of sovereignty—to claim freedom from the West, while slapping on the shackles of the East. According to the President, the Philippines was seeking "distance" of the hostage loss to unite China.

"It's my call," he says. "We've had strained relations because of the thing. I don't want to be a punching bag to many other things. My interest has to be first with the Filipinos."

It is a difficult situation the President finds himself facing. Because of failures in leadership during and after Aug. 23, both by himself and the people beneath him, the Philippines finds itself in dire straits with the world's second largest economy. It is a position that puts the rights of the five survivors with the death penalty, a heartless undertaking...along millionaires is not, they are subject to execution, a punishment long outlawed in the Philippines.

"I don't think it behooves the Philippines to explain exactly or examine its actions," said the President. "We are a sovereign country."

It does behoove the President to explain, not necessarily to the international community, but to the nation, why a knee-handed China can pound away at his defense of human rights. It is not a simple thing, as I have today is already using dear because so justify the "offenses," claiming that it "fully respects the rule of law" when the justices that are stop the decision of the Nobel Committee" and that "the center case of human rights is a western mental as universal imperative. Liu Xiaobo's story is the story of many countrymen and countless couples in the shoulder of the previous regime, as would on him is an assault on the rights of all citizens.

What stops this country from giving away the Sereno's island by island. If China decides it has not reached effective? Do we sign away many agreements, lifted off liberal leases old, pull back from Borneo and the Recess? Do we refuse to sign human rights treaties? Is it a slippery slope, a place where the foreign secretary cannot claim that the Philippines remains "close and consistent on its fight for human rights" as it merely demands its own rights?

This is when the government must acknowledge that a person remains a simple symbolic for issues of development it cannot be more or less than what it is. This is what it means: we believe in truth, and liberty, and the freedom to speak...unless China says we don't.

The Berlusconi paradox

WORLD VIEW

Paolo Mossa

ROME—OVER seven has passed in Italy. Another, perhaps longer season, has just begun.

Not for the first time, Italian politics is a landscape of pandemic and emptiness. Then, a prime minister, who gained massive support from voters early two and a half years ago, now must step overseas, survived over confidence votes in Parliament and still enjoys high approval ratings, is constantly under pressure.

Matteo Renzi have proved since 2014's Democratic, a liberating and scourer for the Italian people, made his first foray into the political big. Reluctantly he's been in the role of the "new" since coming, though, as Gladiator Principal, the editor of Il Foglio, puts it, the popular prototype, not to that, given his commanding personality, he has made the whole same. The Berlusconi era is approaching its end-light, yet because to most ill. Still, so.

Berlusconi, the head of a diversified media empire, television, radio, press, theatres, movies, advertising and books, decided to establish a political party in a time when he believed that economic conditions could was power, moreover. Until 2006, Berlusconi's reliable ally was center-right Northern League Federation, the party-turned-left by constituent Fini and the Catholic Union of the Center (UDC), under Pier Ferdinando Casini's leadership.

In 2006, Fini and Casini were around 40 years old and were in rising ranks of Italian politics. Standing alongside Berlusconi, they did indeed pay, but the spectacle's majority shrinkable.

In 2008, Casini broke from Berlusconi. The—not of confidence that pay took place. Enabled Berlusconi's divorce with the leader of the Italian right, Fini. To both cases, Berlusconi won, but he has paid a heavy price. His government inevitably had a margin of more than 100 votes in Parliament; now, with Casini and Fini gone, is a down on there.

Berlusconi himself seems eager to be only interesting partner. The Northern League, which is an ex-populist wreath (though its charismatic leader, Umberto Bossi, is currently ill). Her supporting, by the League is selling, by new elections in the spring, whereas Berlusconi would prefer to endure the government's majority by bringing back Casini—a pact hears with hurdles and hardship.

After all, Berlusconi's power, while strong, is also strongly connected. On the international scene, the American diplomatic rubric recently released by WikiLeaks highlights Americans to make Berlusconi's party, which are not limited to the country's top—few close, according to the US from Berlusconi—to Vladimir Putin's Russia, to Libya and to Iran.

What is probably more striking for the Anglo-Italian cultural paradigm is the historic body seen in his arc of power—not only when dealing with young and attractive women, but, first and foremost, when advancing his companies' interests against those of their competitors. The story has been told many times, but the president of Mediaset against Digital Murdoch's Sky caused a lot penalty the interventionist than it did in Italy.

Berlusconi regards his "consensual diplomacy" as a formidable defensive weapon, whichever help explains why he is not too concerned about what his country's allies are perceived on the international stage. This is he overly worried about the domestic scene, since opponents are deeply divided and thus unable to offer an electoral alternative.

Berlusconi's enemies, instead, have come to do so much a personal vendetta by the Constitutional Court on corruption charges, and a related ban from public office. Then is why it could also excuse are to be held. Berlusconi may well turn charismatic a personal referendum.

Matteo Renzi, the current head of Italian politics, Western Mediterranean Democratic could part of hands for the country's fiscal policy, yet the government has been unable to prove economic growth. Social unrest, on the other hand, has obviously erupted, with violent protests by students and "indignados" (the Italian version of the Occupy movement).

Renzi could get waste in 2013, in wrong unemployment once forecasted, if consumption. And widespread corporate user spreads on government bonds does not bode well, either, as this will quickly lead to pressure for further spending cuts.

Despite these sources of concern, Italy is a country that generally knows how to deal with economic crisis. But will it be able to deal such a looming political crisis, too? The answer is likely to be a pessimistic one. Italian politics remains very difficult to.

Project Syndicate

Paolo Mossa is editor in chief of the monthly magazine Aleteia.eu, and was spokesman for the Christian party UDC and communication adviser to the vice presidency of the Council of Ministers in three Berlusconi's third government.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2010

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to: jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

Libro Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Health for all feasible

By Fernando A. Melendres, M.D.

THE DECREASING budget for health services highlights once again the need to pursue a reform agenda to provide all Filipinos access to quality but affordable health services. This is an imperative for social equity in which people who have less in life should have more in basic government services, especially for health.

The proposed 2011 budget of P33.3 billion for the Department of Health (DOH) is meager by all measures. It represents about 2 percent of the proposed 2011 national budget of P1.64 trillion, is their careful but exasperating answer, lawmakers have said that the devolution of health services to local government units (LGUs) to the primary means for the less DOH budget.

They have reasoned out that the national government does not have to duplicate what the LGUs are now providing. Otherwise, it would violate Republic Act No. 7160, or the Local Government Code of 1991.

But improved health services presuppose realistic and meaningful devolution. It is highly suspect if our three LGUs have been effectively delivering health services to the people. What is highly perceptible is the progressive diminishment of health services, whether in primary secondary or even tertiary level.

All told, the less DOH budget could mean only one thing: the deterioration in the delivery of health services to more than 90 million Filipinos, many of whom depend on the public healthcare system.

Without saving doctor

If we wish to avoid the perception that ours is a rich country that does not love its people, we must affirm the current deplorable situation in which about 28 percent of all 94 spends have almost no access to health services and nearly 18 percent do with the resting time very in their lifetime.

If the Philippines were to become a responsible member in the community of nations, it has to provide health services to its people. It is the appropriate to the foundation of a progressive nation.

Universal access

The 1987 Constitution provides that the state should have access to health services. This policy finds full expression in Section 23, Article 2, which says: "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and it will health consciousness among them."

In strengthening this mandate, Section 11, Article 13 says: "The State shall adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health and other social services available to all the people at affordable cost. There shall be priority for the needs of the underprivileged, sick, elderly disabled, women and children. The State shall endeavor to provide free medical care to paupers."

Accessible, affordable

Given this constitutional mandate, the health department is implementing a reform agenda to promote social equity and stop the deteriorating national healthcare delivery system. The reform agenda for universal healthcare is anchored on the provision of comprehensive but accessible and affordable health services to all Filipinos.

To make health services available, accessible and affordable, the reform agenda seeks to reauthorize the largely moribund health industry, promote government-private sector partnership in healthcare, mobilize resources for maximum use, and promote efficiency, economy of scale and effectiveness in health service delivery.

The reform agenda hinges on three key points: (1) The provision of coverage of the national health insurance system to include all Filipinos within the next three years, and (2) Provision of effective and affordable health services that shall be accessible to all Filipinos in private and government hospitals.

Financial support

Like any government program, the reform agenda will depend mainly on the successful mobilization of funds for universal healthcare and services for citizens. Funding support is the linchpin of a successful national health delivery program.

The full implementation of Republic Act No. 7875, or the National Health Insurance Act of 1995, on the compulsory health insurance coverage for all Filipinos is a major step in generating funds and, ergo, putting into the health system.

PhilHealth

The full implementation of RA 7875 could mean looking up the modalities prior No. National Health Insurance Fund, enabling PhilHealth to meet the myriad requirements for universal but compulsory coverage of all Filipinos.

In full implementation could mean that hospitals, whether private or public, could expect that a big or sizable part of their income could come from PhilHealth. It could also mean increasing the utilization by the poor and disposal of its huge funds. The nation cannot afford our mismanagement or misuse of its huge investible health insurance funds. Otherwise, the goal of universal healthcare for all Filipinos will fail.

Hence, PhilHealth's aggressive drive for complete health insurance coverage should be partnered with the professionalization of its management to make it competitive and to expand hooking with the world's major health insurance companies.

Difficult to believe

The first reform could probably be the cleansing of its current list of members. PhilHealth's claim that it had 17.8 million members by end-2009 covering 77.4 million Filipinos or 83 percent of the population is difficult to believe. A hard count to refute a more realistic profile and database could be most helpful in making policies, plans and programs.

The initiative could be pursued by the depoliticization of PhilHealth. It has been perceived that its list of members has been bloated, as political candidates used PhilHealth membership as enticement to support them to the pay citizens. Its current management should look for ways to get rid of these political infirmities and strip them of power without unduly disrupting the immediate goal of universal coverage.

Granting that PhilHealth has attained the 82 percent coverage, it bewilders us why PhilHealth has not reached the universal coverage since its inception in 1995. The backlog of almost 20 percent is an anomaly that has to be addressed. PhilHealth has to craft a remedial three-year program to fulfill the mandate of full coverage.

PhilHealth has no choice but to set a deadline, considering it is three years is reasonable. The arena bureaucracy, particularly the managers and various beneficiaries providing social services, would have to be mobilized to perform this three-year initiative, which has to be pursued religiously and without politics.

Cash transfers

An unsolicited advice: Let a part of the proposed P21 billion for conditional cash transfers, which the Department of Social Welfare and Development is to undertake, be used for the compulsory health insurance coverage in the barangay level. The network of barangays could be used for census taking to identify households that would have to be covered. They could also be used for monitoring the progress and effectiveness of healthcare delivery.

The barangays could help to achieve full coverage.

The second reform could be the rationalization of the set of benefits a PhilHealth member could receive. Increasing it to a level to minimize the patient's out-of-pocket payments is a major step to realize the constitutional mandate of "quality health services at affordable costs. This is an extremely difficult issue since this would involve careful investment decisions by the PhilHealth management.

Transparency

For reasons of transparency and professionalism, the current management could look into the possibility of donning its non-profit-ness or making investment decisions. At the same time, it could also look into making these guidelines public.

The nationwide restructuring of the more than 900 state hospitals—and even 1,800 privately owned ones—through mergers and the integration of their health services would help to save on cost and promote operational efficiency. But to simply merge them would not mean better medical services at the least cost without understanding reforms to integrate them with the financial feasibility.

Mergers, restructuring

Hospital restructuring through mergers and integration of health services would be realistic when the merged state hospitals have the financial feasibility of government-owned and controlled corporations. Hence, their mergers should lead to their conversion into GOCCs (or "by corporates") to make them effective, financially self-sufficient and sustainable.

The restructuring through mergers and "corporatization" should be tailored to be effective way to integrate health services to make them more accessible and affordable to all. This is not to be confused with their privatization, which is a totally different and separate issue. The objective is to promote optimal investment ways so ministry equity is here left for Congress to study and decide.

Five QC hospitals

Initially, the five government hospitals in Quezon City (now cited in our locality—that Amang Medical Center, Lung Center of the Philippines, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Philippine Heart Center—could be merged into one system of hospitals to serve as the prototype of future mergers.

Since the five hospitals are in a contiguous area in the Diliman district, their merger makes sense. This could lead to accessible, affordable, comprehensive and sustainable health services to all, particularly those working in the bureaucracy and in the private sector, and the poor.

PGH, Singapore model

The integration of their separate medical, nursing, administrative, managerial and operational staff and services, and their training and research facilities into a single hospital system could lead to economies of scale, allowing the government to maximize the use of its limited resources for health services.

Models for such integrated system of hospitals are the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) and the Singapore General Hospital. With almost the same number of hospital beds and outpatient services and similar services in training and research, PGH has a budget significantly smaller (almost 60 percent) than the budgets of the five Quezon City hospitals.

Since investible private funds are available, the entry of private capital to government hospitals is worth exploring. The merged five state hospitals in their respective new GOCCs can "by corporates") to make them effective, financially self-sufficient and sustainable.

The restructuring through mergers and "corporatization" should be tailored to be effective way to integrate health services to make them more accessible and affordable to all. This is not to be confused with their privatization, which is a totally different and separate issue. The objective is to promote optimal investment ways so ministry equity is here left for Congress to study and decide.

Five QC hospitals

Initially, the five government hospitals in Quezon City (now cited in our locality—that Amang Medical Center, Lung Center of the Philippines, National Kidney and Transplant Institute, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Philippine Heart Center—could be merged into one system of hospitals to serve as the prototype of future mergers.

Since the five hospitals are in a contiguous area in the Diliman district, their merger makes sense. This could lead to accessible, affordable, comprehensive and sustainable health services to all, particularly those working in the bureaucracy and in the private sector, and the poor.

PGH, Singapore model

The integration of their separate medical, nursing, administrative, managerial and operational staff and services, and their training and research facilities into a single hospital system could lead to economies of scale, allowing the government to maximize the use of its limited resources for health services.

Models for such integrated system of hospitals are the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) and the Singapore General Hospital. With almost the same number of hospital beds and outpatient services and similar services in training and research, PGH has a budget significantly smaller (almost 60 percent) than the budgets of the five Quezon City hospitals.

Since investible private funds are available, the entry of private capital to government hospitals is worth exploring. The merged five state hospitals in their respective new GOCCs (or

INQUIRER Mindanao

John Jon Kanapeyel
Bureau Chief Nico R. Alconaba

No end seen to 'lumad' holiday trips

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Inquirer Cagayan de Oro

AT NIGHT, the tender, exhausted bodies rest on the cold, concrete floor of a village gymnasium. During the day, the same bodies walk on the city streets, without slippers, to gather whatever sympathy is left of urbanites.

Oblivious of the firestorm of Davao City, the "lumad" children follow their mothers and fathers—clad in traditional garbs, their robots long faded—whose attention is divided between entertaining residents to get something to return and making sure they avoid the rushing vehicles.

And many of them descending from the hinterlands of Paquibato, Marilog and the villages bounded by Bukidnon, Davao City and Davao del Norte have been injected in vehicular accidents, if not outdoors ill of diarrhea, fever and other common diseases.

Some die with the sickness when they go to the city during Christmas. It is the price they have to pay for wanting to share with the city dwellers the spirit of Christmas that is not even written in the history and culture of Indigenous peoples (IP).

Young and old "lumad" walk barefoot in downtown Davao City during the holidays. (INQUIRER MINDANAO PHOTO)

Sexual abuse cases

Allegations have also surfaced about girls being sexually abused by those who lust for "virgins."

When he met with city officials last month, a tribal chieftain said he learned the holiday exodus stopped after receiving stories of lumad girls being lured into prostitution.

Myrla Lolas Bermudo, head of the city social service and development office, in a way, confirmed such problems with the rescue of four lumad girls from being "illegally recruited" sexual city tourist since last year.

The brief "city life" also ends up in family feuds, with married lumad couples committing infidelity. "Some men enter into illicit affairs, some with the same sex," said Dante Bernardo, a resident of Barangay Cabantian in Buqalihan District.

And when they return to their homes after the season, the offenders feel the problem of where to get the needed payment—in most cases, a horse—to appease the offended party. "We're already running out of horses," a tribal chieftain said.

There have to do this [stay] to avoid a clan war," Bermudo said.

Despite the situation, Bernardo said the lumad people always dream of being in the city every Christmas to "join the celebration."

'Lumad' hosts

At the gym in Barangay 26, one of the host communities, the night is as ugly as it is in Bilatal, Baluarte, Matina or Ecoland.

About 500 families or more than a thousand people stay in the gymnasium, Saidodoloy chair Jun Binayon said. The village has been hosting lumad for the past eight years.

"They are more manageable now, unlike before when we hosted about 4,000 individuals. What we are doing now is we only do our part as long as the city needs and safety are addressed, but we are also making sure that we manage their stay," Binayon said.

Bermudo said only 6,319 individuals or 1,320 families were staying in 10 public gymnasiums. Last year, the agency recorded about 15,000.

Daily food rations

Every day the city government provides each family with two food packs of cooked rice and viand. The previous years, every family received at least a kilo of rice and canned goods daily—on top of their solicitations.

The city has allotted about P5.8 million for the food packs being distributed daily from Dec. 6 to Dec. 26, when the families return to their homes.

On Christmas Day, they will troop to the house of Vice Mayor Rodolfo Uy. However when, in the past years when he was mayor, he will be heading out the streets.

His daughter, Mayor Rubby Baira Duterte, said the city had stopped giving out food packs because the families were reportedly selling them.

In the past, the lumad "feasted" the city government's daily ration of rice and canned goods, which they bring with them home. This time, Bermudo said, food packs of rice, noodles and canned goods would be given.

Criticisms

Kalumarao, a lumad rights group, has criticized the "twisted-ness of the government-backed searches of the lumad's every Christmas." In the first place, Dulping Ogan, its secretary general, said, the tribes do not celebrate Christmas.

"If the local government really wants to help the lumad, in the spirit of Christmas, it needs to help if they bring those gifts and whatever assistance they can extend to the lumad areas rather than have them come down," Ogan said.

He said that looking at the lumad go around the city was disheartening as they are exposed to all sorts of humiliations and abuse.

"The IPs are already an abused group and tolerating this isolated idea of celebrating Christmas with the Christians is adding insult to the injury brought by abuse they have experienced from the past. This madness has to stop," Ogan said.

Bermudo agreed, citing a case of lumad being abused during event chased by dogs.

And if the government is really sincere in helping the lumad, Ogan suggested that this help must be sustainable. "If it is really sincere, why don't they have a long-term plan of allowing the reclamation of the ancestral lands for food production or restore the woods of the hinterlands and end the state of Christmas exodus?" he said.

Mendicancy

Jupris Barroso, a professor of sociology and political science, said supporting the lumad exodus was unnecessary in cultivating mendicancy and stripping them of their sense of pride.

"This is because of the dominance of elitist modernization. Lumad no longer have a space for them to develop and practice their own economic system ... and so they are forced to fit themselves in the landscapers. And as they modernize, they develop the character of begging," Barroso said.

This character of begging, he said, is something that is also perpetuated by the city government—as it failed to care the real problems of the IPs.

"This should not be perpetuated by our city government in the spirit of a Christmas celebration of sharing. This is not the indigenous spirit of sharing, because the lumad may of sharing is having participated in the production process and are not depending on others," he said.

The government, Barroso said, failed to recognize that the IPs' own development lies on the government's recognition of their rights to ancestral lands and self-determination.

"The government must provide venues to develop elective their own potentials for progressive development that is sustainable and with due respect to their indigenous identity and in the defense of environment both as sacred places and sources for their continued survival," he said.

> "We must not dictate on these people. It is their decision to come and go"

City gov't plans

But Bermudo said that if the city government could only stop the lumad from coming in the city, it would. "They came here on their own, making public homes, hiring jeepneys," she said.

"So we provided them with shelter and food."

But Mayor Duterte, the tribes were not forced to go to the city.

"Whatever their decisions, it is the right of every citizen to travel. Who are we to tell them to not come down? What I am sure about is that they are not forced to come down from their villages. And we are not also in the position to ask them to go home. We must not discriminate people. It is their decision to come and go," she said.

One thing is certain, the mayor said, the city's administration has plans to end the exodus. One of them, Bermudo said, "[is] for government to bring to them whatever Christmas gift it can give."

"We made it clear that only those from Davao City should come. We also asked the tribal chieftains not to allow the old, the pregnant women to come," she said. Still, four women have given birth in a gymnasium in Toril.

"We could not stop those pregnant women from coming down," she said, stressing that the number is still down from last year's 15 birthing cases.

Assistant Editor Tony Hiergesia

Across the NATION

5 rebels nabbed on 2nd day of truce

BUTUAN CITY—Authorities in Agusan del Sur arrested—on the second day of the 19-day truce with communist rebels—five suspected rebels, including one that a police official described as a "big fish."

Senior Supt. Nestor Siguera, of the Caraga police, on Sunday identified the "big fish" as Pedro Codasio alias Ka Gregorio, party secretary of the Northeastern Mindanao Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Pajarera said Codasio, believed to be in his 60's, was arrested along with four escorts at a checkpoint in Sibagat, Pili in Barangay town around 11 a.m.

He said the rebel leader and his companions were in a sports utility vehicle that policemen and soldiers stopped at the checkpoint.

"Codasio and his four companions were reportedly arrested at a checkpoint pursuant to several warrants for his arrest," Pajarera said, adding the rebels did not resist arrest when taken into custody.

Charges

Pajarera said Codasio faces charges of multiple murder, attempted murder and homicide.

"Codasio is a big fish, who holds key sensitive positions in the communist movement. His arrest would surely ensure demoralization," he said.

George Madrid, spokesperson of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in Mindanao, said Codasio's arrest violated the ceasefire agreement between the rebel group and the government.

"For years, agreed upon during talks in Hong Kong, started [on] 16...

"The arrest was technically a violation of the spirit of the ceasefire. It sent a flagrant breach and dishonor of the agreement, the government was daring to tear [under] rebel" Madrid told the Inquirer by phone.

Formal complaint

He said the NDF will formally lodge a complaint at the joint ceasefire monitoring committee and will demand the immediate release of Codasio and his companions.

"We are demanding the unconditional release of Codasio and his companions. The charges were just concocted and trumped up," Madrid said.

But Pajarera insisted that authorities ordered a warrant against the captured rebel leader.

"It is a harmful story. Together with the rebels, travel agents, businessmen, some foreigners and students joined the day's trip. The guests were treated to street dancing by the town's youth who moved in ways of birds, which have made this town popular among bird watchers and conservationists.

Visitors were also served rice cooked in banana leaves and adobo, native sausages and salted eggs with tomatoes wrapped in a lotus leaf.

The river journey, though short for the imagined fish, stopped twice at the banks where residents sold freshly grown vegetables, fruits and snacks.

The cruise did not venture further because the water level was lower at this time of the year. [unintelligible] said Candaba Mayor Jerry Delayo.

Pineda said the cruise's main feeding, a non-stop three-glass beer estimated to be worth P5 million, would be manufactured. The Luneta floor features a buffet of native Pampanga dishes and delicacies.

Where said each river cruise can be combined with other activities. Guests can choose from a wide range of activities like bird watching, ecotours, picking, sunset gazing, leisure farming, mangroves planting, church visits, fishing and canoe paddling.

"Your operations should ensure that Candaba is a peaceful zone," said the mayor.

Davao customs exec: Look at big picture in port scandal

DAVAO CITY—The highest ranking customs official here turned the tables on a businessman who had claimed to have uncovered massive corruption in this city's port under the official's watch.

"I hope the media and so-called anti-graft groups will see the big picture in the issue of alleged high-profile smuggling cars in Davao," said reja Nemo Castigador, Davao City district customs collector, in a press statement.

"We must remember that the man they now call a whistleblower is also a businessman who has a multimillion contract," said Castigador.

Ax to grind

Castigador said Rodolfo Reta, owner of Aquarius Container Yard (ACY), reportedly had an ax to grind against the customs bureau.

He said Reta used to be a contractor but on March 5, then Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales rescinded the contract with the businessman after ACY security guards barred customs examiners from entering its compound.

Castigador said customs examiners were to inspect 48 container vans following a smuggling alert from a customs official, 2nd Lt. Ray Inspector Dividina Head, Ma. Lourdes Mangonting. The vans turned out to contain smuggled cars.

Real issue

"Reta reacted making noise about the alleged smuggling activities instead of allegedly covering it up," said Castigador.

He said Reta was trying to "[re-]steal the real issue by claiming that I closed ACY because he exposed the 48 containers of misdeclared goods."

"For the record, it was my office which put an alert on the shipment, seized, declared it abandoned and sold it to public auction," said Castigador.

He said the customs bureau did not err in terminating Reta's contract because the bureau "received numerous complaints on unreasonable fees."

Influence

"Mr. Reta is an influential man with huge resources. Fighting him might cause me my job," said Castigador.

Castigador also said the cargoes of ACY to handle operations at the port was put in question.

Reta, he said, used to earn P4 million to P5 million a week operating ACY.

Castigador said since the customs bureau transferred the cargo operations from ACY to Sasa Wharf, collection reached P5.17 billion.

The Chamber of Customs Brokers Inc. in Davao earlier supported the decision to conduct the inspection of cargo to Sasa Wharf.

Letter of support

The group was quoted as saying its members were having difficulty transacting with ACY and had suffered delays in release of cargo.

It also was quoted as complaining of high fees at ACY and the alleged monopoly it used to enjoy in port operations.

"We, the customs brokers in the port of Davao, firmly and strongly support your recommendation to withdraw the accreditation of shipments for those inside Sasa Wharf," the group said in a letter to Castigador. *Inquirer Mindanao*

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT
Students of the University of the Philippines Baguio offered yuletide cheer last Saturday evening by lighting their lolo lanterns and giant puppets. They marched through downtown Baguio for their annual Parolitaan.

Police say 2 hired guns slain in Laguna clash

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Two suspected hired killers, one of which was identified as the gun man in the ambush of a councilor in Bian City last month, were killed in a gunbattle with police in Cabuyao, Laguna, yesterday.

Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao Jr., Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon) police director, said in a statement that members of the police Regional Public Safety Battalion (RPSB) were in pursuit of the suspects when they got a tip that a group of hired killers were planning another ambush in Laguna.

Police were after three suspects in a motorcycle who were first spotted in Calamba and were on their way to Cabuyao.

Following a brief chase, the authorities encountered the suspects as they were in Barangay San Isidro at around 4 a.m. This resulted in an exchange of gunshots.

"It [gunfire] did not last long," said Senior Supt. Edgardo de Leon, RPSB group director, in a phone interview.

He said two of the suspects were immediately killed, while the other four escaped. He one man hurt from the police.

Initial investigation by the police revealed that one of the slain suspects was a certain Ernesto Hidaya, who was responsible for the murder of Bian City councilor Rodrigo Casas.

The other three gunmen remains unidentified.

In late November, Casas was leaving the city government office when two men in a motorcycle shot him dead.

Pagdilao said village officials turned out to be a member of a gun for hire syndicate "involved in the liquidation of prominent personalities in southern Tagalog." Mariluar Cleon, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Candaba: From catch basin to tour site

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CANDABA, Pampanga—Cuisine in the past by students invented in Metro, 200 tourists were introduced to the Pampanga River cruise on Thursday, with local officials promising that it would soon become the country's newest natural tourism destination.

"It's very nice," Sen. Pia Cayetano said after the ride conducted from the Kalakasan fish port. Aurora Gloria Diaz said: "It's [a] refreshing trip."

For Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda, it was a good start for more leisurely cruises to 2013.

They all rode in a small native-colored ferry that had a flotilla of 10 colorful boats named after some of the 105 species of local and migratory birds already sighted in Candaba.

Department of Tourism offi-

RAINBOW COLORED boats from Candaba cruising the Pampanga River. The Candaba swamp river transfer to the natural flood catch basin into the town's ecotourism center. *pia cayetano*

Town demands taxes, but mine firm cries harassment

BUTUAN CITY—The municipal government of Tubay, Agusan del Norte, has ordered the closure of nickel mining firm Hinatuan Mining Inc. (HMI) for alleged failure to pay millions of pesos in extraction fee and cases of violations of environmental laws.

Tubay Vice Mayor Fidel Garcia said the firm's reprieved extend to pay extraction fee and cases prompted town officials to order its closure.

But Edgar Brito, chair of the board of directors of HMI, said the move was a form of harassment.

"This is political harassment. As far as HMI is concerned, we have not committed environmental lapses, we paid our dues and performed our social responsibilities," Brito said.

He said the firm has a bilateral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) issued by the national government. As a Board of Investments-listed firm, HMI was not obliged to pay extraction fee to the government of Tubay.

"The claim that we owed Tubay town and province of Agusan del Norte is illegal and baseless," said Brito. "Under the MPSA, we are only bound to pay excise taxes," he said.

Garcia said HMI, which operates a nickel mine on 324 hectares of land in the town, owed Tubay at least P266 million. The mine is believed to contain at least 10 million tons of nickel ore.

"Mining is supposed to benefit our town, but what's happening really was a conglomeration of grievances from complainant of cases, environmental destruction and health hazards," Garcia said.

Brito, however, said HMI is being singled out by politicians in the town.

"The problem with Tubay politicians is that they are so involved in mining. They have mining interests," he said. *Franklin A. Caligyid, Inquirer Mindanao*

PNP to form task force for new Vizconde probe

By Alcuin Papa
and Leila B. Salaverria

THE PHILIPPINE National Police is preparing to form a special task force for the reinvestigation of the 1991 Vizconde massacre case in hopes of finding new leads and the others responsible for the murders so arrested may be prosecuted to file charges of false testimony against prosecution witnesses, Interior Affairs.

Chief Supt. Agnimon Cruz, the PNP spokesperson, yesterday said the task force would use new methods and new technology in the reinvestigation, which President Aquino had directed the justice department and law enforcement agencies to conduct.

The 30-year prescription period of the Vizconde massacre, after which no more charges can be filed, is due to lapse in six months.

"We will follow the orders of our President. As of this moment, the PNP is organizing the special investigation task group," Cruz said.

"The procedures and processes that were undertaken [during the first investigation] will be reviewed. There might be a new scientific process that we can use," he said.

Cruz said the task force would also look into the search for Joey Filart and demand testimony, the two accused in the case who are still at large.

"There might be a new law that we can use to catch them and bring them to justice," he said.

Cruz said the PNP would "do everything" in its power to reinvestigate the case and provide closure despite its tight deadline.

"We will use the new equipment acquired by our crime laboratory and the new investigative skills that we have learned from our foreign counterparts ... to see to it that the evidence that we did not have to put a closure to this case," he said.

Manipulation

At a press conference yesterday, lawyers led by Jose Flaminiano also said they intended to file administrative and criminal cases against the National Bureau of Investigation agents and public and private prosecutors who might have taken part in the purported manipulation of Alfaro's initially damaging testimony. One possible charge is fabrication of evidence.

Among the lawyers present were Abellanosa Aguirre and Rose Sapalaco, who also explained that a false machinery charge could only be filed after a trial had been concluded.

Flaminiano said among the evidence they would use was the account of a defense witness, retired Col. Armando Gutierrez, who had studied the case on the request of Loren Vizconde, whose wife Vizconde and daughters Carmela and Jennifer were found killed in their home on June 30, 1991.

Flaminiano had spoken of how Loren Vizconde's lawyers had actually found "so many loopholes" in Alfaro's account, among others.

Both sides in Webb case 'equally at fault'

From page A1

ply the sub judice rule to the Vizconde massacre case because the controlling justice—Lauro Vizconde and the Webb family—were in "pari delicto" or "in equal fault" for taking their respective causes to the court.

"Thus, the egregious action of one has been cancelled by a similar action by the other. It is in this sense that this supplemental opinion is independent of the merits of the case. Their common action, therefore, is not the direct cause of the legal effects on both, whatever the results may be, doubts will linger about the real merits of the case due to the inordinate media campaign that transpired," Bunag wrote.

Bunag explained the sub judice rule as restraining "comments and disclosures pertaining to pending judicial proceedings."

"The restriction applies not only to participants in the pending case, i.e., to members of the bar and bench, and to litigants in the case, but also to the public in general, which necessarily includes the media," he said.

Bunag said he was fully aware that the Vizconde massacre was "one of the most sensational criminal cases in Philippine history in terms of the mode of commission of the crime and the personalities involved."

Independent of merits

He said he wrote his supplemental opinion "independent of the merits of the case ... to point out the glaring disregard and misdemeanors of the sub judice rule, to the detriment of the rights of the accused, the integrity of the courts, and, ultimately, the administration of justice."

He said Bunag in his last paragraph of his opinion "Last to be misunderstood, our application of the sub judice rule in this case cannot serve as a precedent for similar future violations. Evidently, this ... is a signal to all that this Court has not forgotten, and is in fact keenly aware of, the rules of order and we publicly vacillated on the merits of a case while sub judice, and on the comments on the conduct of the course with respect to the case. This Court will not stand by idly and helplessly as its integrity as an institution and its processes are shamelessly brought to disrepute."

Asked to comment on Bunag's opinion, human rights lawyer Theodore Te told the Inquirer in a text message that it appeared to be "interesting."

"He's scribbling a warning that violations of sub judice will be met with contempt," said Te, a member of the Free Legal Assistance Group.

But Te said he disagreed with the sub judice rule because it "stifles free expression."

"We must depend on the jury system, which we don't have. Even with discussion and comment on pending cases, judges are not expected to be independent enough to not be influenced by what is popular or notorious, unlike jurors who are ordinary persons," he said.

Bunag noted that while many had criticized the rule as a curtailment of free speech, it was "not imposed on all forms of speech."

He said that in contempt proceedings, "the only two-sided and 'publicized speech' made while a case was under judgment that could be 'contemptuous'..."flow, comments on the merits of the case, and unusual, intemperate and unreasonable comments on the conduct of the courts with respect to the case."

"Comment on the conduct of the courts with respect to the case becomes subject to a contempt proceeding when it is intemperate, is unreasonable, and unduly impairs the dignity of the court," he said, adding:

"Without the sub judice rule and the contempt power, the courts will be powerless to protect their integrity and independence that are essential in the orderly and effective administration and administration of justice."

Free to criticize

Bunag said the courts, being the third branch of government, is muzzled not necessarily to the people.

"The people's freedom to criticize the government includes the right to criticize the courts, their proceedings and decisions ... And to eliminate the open court principle and allow the people to make fair and reasoned criticisms of the courts' decisions will only embellish them to coverage that and associate reports (without comment) of what have actually taken place in open court," he said.

He observed that the media reports that created a stir before the promulgation of the case focused on Loren Vizconde's claim that a Supreme Court justice was trying to influence his colleagues to acquit Webb et al., and the Webb family's reaction.

Noy to stop ...

From page A1

acting on the suggestion of former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo for him to intervene and seek the nullification of the plea bargain agreement.

Article 8 says the findings of Marcelo's suggestion, not binding and he had ordered the review and was waiting for Ochoa's recommendation.

He said Malacañang was "studying all of the options."

"I want to be apprised of everything that was opined," the President said.

Marcelo ... who earlier said the prosecutors acted in recurring into the plea bargain and in violated court procedures and that the government was sure to have gotten a conviction—said that Mr. Aquino, as recommendation-in-chief, should investigate other 8 state witnesses who had been approved by Garcia's alleged pilfering of funds and because the deal was a blow to the President's anti-corruption campaign.

He said Mr. Aquino should direct the solicitor general to file a motion to intervene in the case to declare the nullity of the plea bargain.

Deputy Special Prosecutor Jose Justino Jorda said yesterday said the agreement was subjected to the scrutiny of the court and would not be approved if something in it was amiss.

He said Chief Justice Renato Corona "knows our position" on the plea bargain and not even read the agreement as full.

"It depends on the court. If the agreement is in order, it will approve it. If it's not in order, the court will not approve it," Mirasol said.

The Sandiganbayan 2nd Division has yet to issue a resolution regularly saying that it had approved the deal.

Free again

After six years in detention, Garcia walked out of his Camp Crame detention cell at 4:30 p.m. yesterday. His lawyer, Commissioner Jose Arnas, picked him up and took him to the lawyer's in Vera subdivision house.

A visibly happy and relaxed Garcia, wearing a black shirt and black pants, emerged from the detention center with his family.

He shook hands with Chief Supt. James Melad, Camp Crame commander and chief of the Headquarters Support Services Group, and Supt. Cesar Mangaoa, chief of the detention center, before getting into the lawyer's car.

At the gate, Garcia rolled down his window to wave at reporters but refused to answer questions. Only, he just said, "Thank you."

"He (Garcia) is happy. He couldn't sleep from the anticipation," Dr. Jorda said reporters when he arrived earlier that morning.

The lawyer said he did not know what his client's plans are now that he is free.

"He has a lot of things to take care of. He will try to adjust because he has been in there a long time. He has to take care of the cases of his wife and children," said he Jorda.

Sub justice

The lawyer refused to comment on the case, particularly about how much of the P303 million would be returned to the government.

"We might be in sub judice," he said.

Garcia would have been released last Thurs. day after Dr. Jorda posted his P66,000 bail but the release was delayed by paper work. Melad said the delay was because of the time required to get clearances from various units and agencies. Garcia also had to undergo a medical examination.

Other recourses

Special Prosecutor Wendell Sulit earlier said the government decided to enter into a plea bargain in order to protect the interest of the state. Sulit said the deal would allow the government to take control of Garcia's assets immediately and avoid the years that have been eating legal process.

But Marcelo, who was ombudsman when the case against Garcia was first filed, said there were other recourses other than a plea bargain that the prosecution could have taken if they had such concerns.

If prosecutors were worried that the case would drag on too long, they could have asked the court to speed up the trial, he said.

As for concerns about the deterioration of the assets, he said most of those were real properties. He also said the assets will be sold to preserve their values.

Jailed in 2004

Garcia, a member of the Philippine Military Academy class of 1971, was first placed under preventive detention initially by the ombudsman in 2004 after he was charged with perjury and plunder.

His wife and three sons who are also co-accused in the plunder case are still in the US, and are US citizens.

On Dec. 15, 2003, two of Garcia's sons were arrested in the San Francisco airport for allegedly trying to take out $100,000. They are under electronic monitoring and are awaiting trial.

His wife, Clarita, and a third son were arrested in the US in 2005 based on an earlier request from the Philippine government.

In 2005, Garcia was found guilty by a military court of violating articles of War 95 (Disobedience of superior officer) and 97 (conduct prejudicial to good military order and discipline). He was sentenced to one year of hard labor and separation from the service. But the penalty had already served.

PDI busts, bails 'indies' for reviving PH film as art

From page B1

continue to applaud your victories and we will encourage you to further express your own artistry and ideas. The world will see that the Filipino story is all about," she said.

The government officials present—Briccio Santos Cloud of the Film Development Council of the Philippines and Mario Orosa Dalmacio of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board—promised to support the indies during the landmark gathering revived by all three major TV networks, ABS-CBN, GMA7 and TV5.

Rebels and indies

Perhaps in keeping with the papa's "fearless views" slogan, the filmmakers felt relaxed and comfortable enough to express their sometimes-bolder intellectual, and in particular to the two government representatives.

"In the spirit of being a rebel and an indie, I want to recall our problems with the previous censors board. In the past, 45 indie films were rated X, and both of those films were directed by straight's honorees," said honoree Paulo Villaluna in his acceptance speech.

He said it was high time the indie community had a representative in the MTRCB. "I am sure the last time that happened was during the term of former MTRCB chair Armida Siguion-Reyna who served from 1998 to 2001."

In her speech, Lumanlan too said that before accepting the MTRCB appointment, it said that it consulted members of the movie and TV industries" and made sure to include a "director or producer from the independent community" in her list of nominees so the new board (now counting the appointed Penaflorida) is complete.

"My aim is to establish a board that is fair, open-minded and responsible," she reassured the filmmakers.

She recalled that her father, the late movie star and National Artist Fernando Poe Jr., was among "the pioneering independent producers who broke away from the big studio system in the 1960s," along with other big names stars like her mother, movie queen Susan Roces, comedy king Dolphy and Joseph Estrada, the movie star turned president.

In true indie spirit, "my dad would ask his friends to act in or direct his films," she recalled.

Drawing up his indie family she said she knows the hardships experienced by an indie producer. She said it made her sad to see the local film industry in dire straits.

"The solution is for the movie industry to reinvent itself," and the best way to reinvent is by "opening the way towards the mainstream of the Philippines," she said.

Her parting advice was a quote from Hollywood star Judy Garland: "Be the first rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate imitation of others."

"Our biggest capital may be creativity and originality," Lumanlan says said.

"Keep doing your films and we at the MTRCB will be here to support you," she said.

Industry slowdown

In an interview, Lumanlan says said her goal as censor-chief is to make the board the best advocate for independent filmmakers. She said the government was finally facing the possibility of outsourcing or minimizing the fees levied on qualified indie filmmakers.

Lumanlan and Santos promised to meet with the indies again and discuss possible areas of cooperation, among them the setting up of grants for indie films shown in local film festivals.

In impromptu remarks, Santos, who heads the FDCP, the government agency tasked to oversee the film industry, noted that there has been a slowdown in the production of local movies.

Whereas previous years saw an output of 200 films per year, only 26 films will have been produced by mainstream producers by the end of 2010, he said.

By contrast, at least 52 independently produced films have hit local theaters.

Festivals, cinemas/theaters

If the producers of digital film festivals like Cinemalaya, Cinemanila, Cinema One and Cinemanila were to be added to the figure, at least 300 indie movies were produced this year, according to Money Lanuza of the UP Film Institute.

Santos pointed the indie filmmakers for remaining committed to their art, despite the problems of the industry.

He said the FDCP has come up with additional measures to help indie filmmakers, apart from the grants that are released through the Cinema Evaluation Board (that it gives.

He talked about launching Rising Filmmakers, a series of indie film festivals to be held in various provinces.

The fourth Sinag Pantheon will be held at SM City Bacolod, from Jan. 19 to 31, in time for the annual Dinagyang festival," he said.

The Indie festival is being staged with the help of local government units (LGUs) inspired festivals are being planned throughout 2011.

For the Sinag Pantheon screenings, Santos promised to give indie filmmakers the "real cinema treatment."

"Even if Filipino filmmakers to reach viewers in the region. They are loved and honored abroad, but when they get home, there are no venues for their films," he said.

In line with the council's goal for indies to reach a wider audience, Santos said the FDCP is establishing cinematheques or alternative screening venues nationwide.

The first cinematheque will be in Makati. At least four cinematheques will be established in 2011, in the cities of Baguio, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan de Oro and Iloilo.

"Eventually all 16 regions will have their own cinematheques. Apart from allowing students and film buffs to watch classic and indie films, these will also serve as venues where they can hold discussions and meaningful exchanges," he said.

A haven at Inquirer

Inquirer entertainment editor Jimmy G. Valmoria pointed out that the newspaper's Makati office has become an alternative screening venue where "indie filmmakers have found a home."

Some of the films that have been screened at the Inquirer were the movies of the evening's honorees: Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil's "Banal"; Brillante Mia Mendoza's "Kinatay"; "Tirador," and "Lola"; Chris Martinez's "100"; Auraeus Solito's "Pisay"; and Erik Matti's "On the Job," among others.

The monthly indie screenings, which started four years ago, found a staunch supporter in publisher-to-agent Sandino who said in his speech: "Indie films are the only films I truly wholeheartedly deserved of honoring the indies."

In her speech, Valmoria stated: "The Inquirer aspires to be the media home of the indies. As a media organization, we are fueled by a passion with indies who embellish their fix coverage that and associate reports (without comment) of what have actually taken place in open court," he said.

He observed that the media reports that created a stir before the promulgation of the case focused on Loren Vizconde's claim that a Supreme Court justice was trying to influence his colleagues to acquit Webb et al., and the Webb family's reaction.

HARRY WINSTON®

LIVE THE MOMENT™

ADORA

GREENBELT 3 AYALA CENTER MAKATI

Aplus METRO
Editor Alexander S. Lumicao

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FROM THE POOR

A different gift-giving activity in Makati

By Tina G. Santos

FOR THE last three years, single mom Teresa, a resident of Makati City, has done what most of us find difficult to do: giving until it hurts.

Even more admirable is that Teresa is not a highly paid executive or a privileged lady of leisure.

Every month, she sets aside a portion of her modest salary as a janitress in a Makati-based firm to give to charity during Christmas.

"I really can't afford to make a one-time, big-time donation, that's why I just try to save up a little amount each month until the end of the year," said Teresa, a 43-year-old mother of three.

Teresa donates her savings to "Ipaabot-Ito sa Ala-Eva ng Belen-Dos," the annual Christmas gift-giving activity of their church, San Isidrong Pilipino (SIP), that benefits mainly poor parishioners of Barangays Bangkal and Sto. Del Pilar.

"This is my way of thanking God for all blessings He gave me and my children during the year," she told Inquirer. "Times may really be hard these days, but you know what they say: When something good happens to you or was done for you, give back by paying it forward."

Although donations from well-off homeowners outside of the communities are very much welcome, the majority of the project's donors, including Teresa, are the parishioners themselves.

"We involve our parishioners, many of whom belong to the middle- and lower-income bracket, in activities and make them conscious of the blessings given to them," said Fr. Bonito Ilao, of San Isidrong Pilipino.

"We always give emphasis on the fact that we are all merely God's stewards; that everything comes from Him. And this is a beautiful occasion for us to show our gratitude to Him by sharing what we have with others," he said.

He stated that the project donors, who themselves can be considered practically hard-up as well, are very generous...and humble.

"They give whatever they can afford. That's actually the beauty of it. This person that one doesn't have in he rich to be able to give," Fr. Ilao said, adding that many givers prefer to remain anonymous.

But not all donations come in the form of money or goods that are usually offered during the Mass, he added.

Some give their time, like the volunteers of the church's social services and development ministry (SSDM)—which organizes the gift-giving activity—who help prepare the goodie bags distributed to the communities' pastors of the poor every Dec. 22 at 2 p.m.

Each bag contains basic staples like a few kilos of rice, sugar, coffee, milk, noodles and canned goods for Noche Buena.

Gemzie Mahandal, coordinator of SIP's SSDM said they intend to help 800 to 1,000 families this year.

The recipient families are identified by the parish's several area coordinators.

"But we give priority to those who are really in need like informal settlers, those have meager earnings or are unable to make both ends meet, and indigent senior members of the church and its organizations," said Mahandal, who added that they also allot part of the donations to indigent families outside the parish.

Other parishes may have their own way and day for distributing gifts. They may call it by any other names or terms as a means to gather gifts in cash or in kind, but they're all one and the same," Ilao said.

"Ipaabot-Ito sa Ala-Eva ng Belen Dos" started in 2001 to mark SIP's 50th anniversary, said Fr. Cris Magbitang, who conceptualized the project together with Fr. Patchik Villasoto., then the parish priest of UDE.

"We came up with the project to facilitate our gift-giving program every Christmas," said Magbitang, now the vice dean of studies at Divi Rosio Center of Studies in Bonifacio City, in a separate interview.

Prior to that, gift-giving was done separately by almost every organization of the parish.

"More often than not, the organizations had the same set of recipients. So we thought of coming up with something that would centralize the gift distribution activity of the parish during the holidays. That way resources are maximized and more people would benefit from it," he explained.

He said the activity encourages people to share their blessings without particularly choosing who to share it with.

"Most of them are happy to have been given the opportunity to help," Magbitang said, adding that some even make

SAN ISIDRONG Church on Evangelista Street in Makati. One doesn't have to be rich to be able to give. STAR/RICHARD VISCONDE

A COPYRIGHT ICE

red mobile
Unbelievable unli rates, unli for you!
CRAZY LOW RATES
UNLI QUATRO
P4
Unlimited texts red to red.
To register, text TUA to 8848. Valid for 1 day.
UNLI OCHO
P8
Unlimited calls and texts red to red.
To register, text CTU8 to 8848. Valid for 1 day.
ABOT-KAYA. ABOT LAHAT. Turn red na!

MOVING ON

A new home for the new year for displaced families

By Kristine Felicia Manguiat

MARIA LIBERTY Agao never touched the makeshift house in Riverside, Valenzuela City that had been her home for almost 13 years as she trudged her way home one very rainy day in September 2009.

That's way too house to speak of when she got there.

For one, she found pieces of coconut lumber that made up her dusty flooring in four-foot-deep water no chilled swimmer would have dared tread. The tin sheets that once served as roof had been ripped off, and shards of her "windows," which her factory worker husband had worked so hard to fix, littered the water like pieces of broken dreams.

"I lost everything at the height of Typhoon Ondoy," the amiable, trembling the feeling of grief and loss she shared with more than 100,000 families displaced throughout the metro.

As 2009 drew to a close, Agao let know that the coming year held no promise of hope and celebration.

But a year later, things have changed for the Agao family.

The family of the 49-year-old housewife has been named one of the 32 initial beneficiaries of a housing resettlement program launched this year by the Valenzuela city government, in coordination with the city's private sector and Gawad Kalinga, a nongovernment organization committed to building homes by means of volunteerism.

The project aims to relocate the 1,000 families who lost their homes near the 23-km Tullahan River, where as many as 300 shanties were totally wiped out by the heavy rains and raging floods wrought by Ondoy.

"The displaced families is a problem government officials will have to face," General Emilio Ildefonso, project director Ulysses Aguilar said in an interview with the Inquirer.

Valenzuela is a staunch supporter of its city relocation. In October, Vice President Jejomar Binay hailed the city government for its "contribution in advocating and promoting efficient delivery of housing beneficiaries, programs and projects."

At the off-stands of the typhoon, the city government, General Kalinga and the private sector signed a memorandum of agreement that will see an initial three clusters out of a total of 16 medium-rise cluster 1,000 displaced families, the remaining 500 will be relocated to a still-to-be-determined site. A total of 48 families were supposed to be awarded with units before the year ends, but because of bad weather that hampered the delivery of construction materials in October, that figure has been reduced to 32 family-beneficiaries in December.

"The first batch will be transferred in December before the year ends, the 32 will have settled in their new homes. The other batch will be able to relocated by the second week of January. We are in the process of excavating for buildings 4, 5 and 6," added Aguilar, who is also the chief of staff of Valenzuela Rep. Sherwin Gatchalian.

Aguilar said the houses will be painted on Dec. 27, which will give the initial batch ample time to transfer to their new homes before the year ends.

Although heeding for the project is caused by the city's private sector through the Valenzuela Housing Beneficiaries Inc., organizers still believe in the importance of the participation of beneficiaries in the endeavor.

"BAHAY-BAHAYAN" Housing crops for construction (front) Gawad Kalinga-Dolphine Village project manager Ulysses Aguilar, Gawad Kalinga-Dolphine Village project engineer Johnny San Miguel, Gawad Kalinga area coordinator Jay Molano and Dolphine Housing Foundation Inc. and Resort, warehouse keeper (DANNIEL NACHOR)

The village will be furnished with amenities that include a community assembly center, health center, daycare center, livelihood training center and a park for this reason, a "reward system" system similar to that established in other Gawad Kalinga projects, has been set up, where beneficiaries, regardless of age, will be required to dedicate a minimum number of 500 hours in community-building activities.

"This is one way for them to be able to contribute to the project," Aguilar said.

But the "reward equity" system is not all about what the beneficiaries can do for community-building. Organizers of the project have also invested a cushion component in the system so that the family-beneficiary with the most number of hours rendered in community-building activities gets to choose the unit they want.

Ellen Reyna, officer-in-charge of the city's Housing and Resettlement Office (HRSO), said they came up with a work schedule for the beneficiaries. For example, if 16 are needed for construction work, they are urged up if they are available. He sum up the hours spent by each family in the site, and then rank them according to the time they spent working on the project. They are sure that let to determine who gets a first crack at the units on the site," she added.

Community-building involves a wide range of activities, from helping in the construction of the physical shops in the area to sustainability.

Rounding values formation seminars conducted by Gawad Kalinga every Sunday will not only help them appreciate what the government is doing for them, and help them become (what) Darlin' responsibilities are" to make them more as one community. Its corresponding member of hours can also be credited to the family-beneficiaries' overall figure.

Thus beneficiaries, however, does not mean that those who are willing to help beyond the 500 hours cannot do so. Aguilar said that many beneficiaries did not even count the hours that they put in the job. This is proof of their determination to help—and not just to own a house—in the long run.

Only recently the Agao family topped in the initial rankings released by the HRSO.

"We did not had prayed for we got, really stood more than what we requested. We can now celebrate the coming of 2011 in our new home," Agao said. "It is truly a time to welcome a new year full of promise and hope."

FLU VACCINES FOR PASAY SCHOOL. Doctors and nurses from Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. were tipped recently by Smart Communications Inc. to conduct a free vaccination program at the Marcela Marcelo Elementary School in Malibay, Pasay City. The schools extraordinary of Command Each, a program of Smart, in partnership with Gilat Arabic, Inc. and the Philippine Business for Social Progress. (JOEY GUILAS JR.PHOTO)

A different ...

From page A-11

little sacrifices just to be able to share.

He cited the openness and employees of a shipping company in Barangay Sangkat who, a few years ago, decided to forego a lavish Christmas party celebration so they could donate part of their budget to the parish's gift-giving tradition.

Magbitang also noted that apart from giving joy, the activity also makes the less fortunate families feel important and recognized as part of the parish.

"Usually, those are the people who are not active in church," he added. "But through our Christmas tradition, we try to assure them that that they are our kapatids and that they are still valued as part of the parish community."

HAPPY All the donors, who are just as hard up as their beneficiaries, are happy to be given an opportunity to help others. (ALEX BADAYOS)

Meralco's 'Bituin' TV ad pays homage to the Light of Christmas

Pipeline repair won't be over until March

By Tina D. Santos

MOTORISTS passing along Magallanes Interchange in Makati City might still have to endure their jostles for 3 more months as traffic conditions get back to normal on some portions of Edsa because of the continuous work on the Star Philippine Industrial Corp. (PIPIC) pipeline.

"The traffic situation in the area is not likely to be fully resolved until March. One problem at the Magallanes Interchange is not yet over," said Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Francis Tolentino said.

The pipeline remains closed after a pipeline running through Osmeña Highway was found to be the source of the oil leak in the basement of the 20-story Petar Tower condominium in Barangay Bangkal.

Last Friday, the MMDA granted additional truck ban exemptions to fuel tankers and for use of other oil industry firms to prevent artificial shortage that could result from the contents and duration of pipeline.

This is on top of the truck ban exemptions previously granted to Shell and Chevron.

Tolentino approved the issuance of exemptions to 300 units belonging to Petron, Total, Sea-Oil, Jetti and PNOC after meeting with Department of Energy officials.

"We virtually have no truck ban now. Trucks are on the road 24 hours a day. That has added to our traffic woes," he said.

The MMDA has also given the PIPIC a period to continue its pipeline repair work until Feb. 1. The work, which may include a portion of the pipeline near the Magallanes Interchange, runs from the MMDA to keep at least one lane of the intersection closed to traffic.

"This will further hamper traffic flow, specially during the ongoing Christmas rush," Tolentino said.

MetroBriefs

Livelihood for 'sulig-lig' drivers

IF THE Manila city government would insist on banishing kuligligs (motorized pedicabs) drivers from its streets, it should offer them an alternative livelihood or provide them with other options, said Commission on Human Rights Chair Loretta Rosales. Rosales said on Friday at a hearing at the CHR that the Manila city government failed to hold consultations with the affected drivers to discuss their options about the motorized pedicabs that have been cited as a cause of traffic jams in the city. Kuligligs drivers as well as representatives from the city government and the Manila police attended the hearing. According to Rosales, said "feasible alternatives" such as legalizing the kuligligs or regulating them could have been tackled if authorities were willing to do outright ban. The also said that Manila city officials did not take into account the fact that kuligligs drivers rely solely on their trade to make a living. (Jaleel P. Babaomelo)

NUPL photo contest

THE NATIONAL Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL) is announcing its selection of organizations of lawyers, law students, paralegals and legal workers in the Philippines, a calling on shutterbugs to submit documentary photography contest entitled "Shoot!" capture the struggle for justice of human rights victims. The contest is part of its advocacy campaign using images of the struggle for justice and promote human rights in the country through increasing public awareness on cases of human rights violations. The photo contest is open to both student amateur and professional photographers. All entries must be submitted through mail or personal delivery to the NUPL National Office at #7 Roces Avenue, Sanctuary Bldg., Barangay Central, Quezon City on or before Dec. 30. Winners will receive P15,000, P10,000 and P5,000 each for the first, second and third places, respectively. The awarding ceremony will be held on Jan. 10, 2011. For more details, please visit www.nupl.net.

OLFU Granted Level III Re - Accredited Status by PACUCOA

Another score for the Lady of Fatima University's College of Nursing as the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA) granted Level III Re- Accredited Status to the College of Nursing.

OLFU's College of Nursing is the first in the National Capital Region (NCR) to be granted the Level III Re- Accredited Status by PACUCOA. With this, the College is entitled with all the privileges from the Level I and II Accredited Status and in addition, the privilege to offer new courses without prior approval from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and to offer graduate programs and new graduate programs.

The College has produced 28 topnotchers in the past five years and is recognized as a Center for Development Moreover, it has been the first in many areas including the use of the most comprehensive Virtual laboratory in the Philippines and human patient simulators with over the counters.

PACUCOA is a private accrediting agency which gives formal accreditations to colleges and universities judging it on its various areas including but not limited to academic competence and performance, academic programs and educational objectives. The awarding ceremonies was held at the Diamond Hotel on December 10, 2010 alongside the celebration of the 25th founding year of the PACUCOA.

OLFU was granted Autonomous Status by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and is the home of topnotchers in the areas of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Medical Laboratory Sciences.

OVERSEAS workers are moving the market. Properties are selling and when there is demand, prices go up. —Emily Zialcita, Real Estate Brokers Association of the Philippines

GLOBAL Pinoy

Editor Monica Feria

globalpinoy@inquirer.com.ph

This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Fil-ams learn art of parol making

By Jayvee T. Gacal

HE MAY be based in the United States for 30 years now, but artist Fred de Asis is making sure the art and culture of Filipinos are not lost to young Filipino-Americans.

De Asis, owner and curator of the Filipino Fine Art Studio in Chicago, has been conducting his first workshops since 2006 on the making of the parol, the Philippines' famed Christmas lantern.

"My annual parol workshops average around 150 participants, aged 4-94," said De Asis, who was in many last week to conduct one of his workshops awards for outstanding Filipino overseas.

He also teaches the kids and their parents how to make the Pinoy star-shaped lights. It's a way of strengthening parent and child relationships, he said.

Rediscovering kaligrafi

De Asis has been making waves in the US recently with his total of six art exhibit called "Kaligrafi: The Lost Art of the Philippines."

"Kaligrafi" is a Philippine art technique inherited from early 15th century Europeans and Orientals' art processes. It is characterized by swirling interwoven lines and multifaceted textures that create an illusion of three-dimensional space.

Passed down through the generations, De Asis said he learned the technique from his father and grandfather in Ilocos. He is a pioneer of the technique in North America, and has been curating the "Kaligrafi" exhibit since 2005, showcasing his works and even an original 19th-century piece.

"My mission is to revive the lost art and preserve for the public the history and rediscovery of this ancient art form from the Philippines," he says.

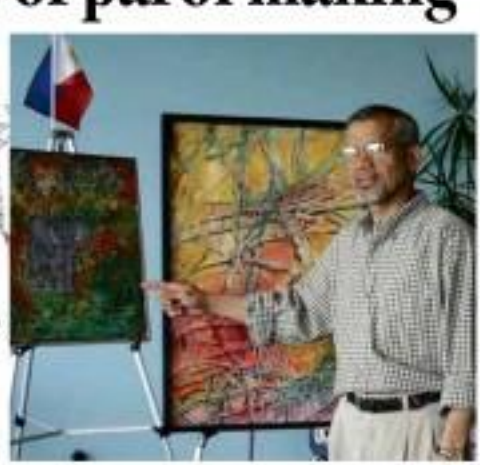
Innate talent

De Asis hails from a family of artists and musicians. He insists talent runs further than years of Fine Arts studies at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, School of the Arts in Chicago, and Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid, among others.

He says he could handle satin, but works mostly with wood, using sculptures to creative photographs. He has in his catalog more than 200 printings, which show moving graces and styles. Most notables are abstracts, such as colorful and exotic. "Art is my passion and compulsion," he says. "My art pieces often take months to complete."

De Asis' clientele includes private collectors from across North America, Asia and Europe. His works have been featured in galleries like the Bellas Artes Gallery of London, Galleria Affanias of Madrid, the Ginza Mehl Gallery of Tokyo, and even a Cebu Pacific Airlines flight. The first time a Filipino artist was commissioned by the high-end department store.

CHICAGO-BASED artist Fredric de Asis is promoting "kaligrafi," an ancient Philippine art technique



Tribal identity

But the "first love" piece remains his pet project, and labor of love.

"My ancestors incorporated designs or inscriptions that represented the identity of their tribal unit. They also presented stories on each side of the square panel where the sun was usually done. A single artwork could, thus, contain four stories," he relates.

During lectures and demonstrations, De Asis teaches how "kaligrafi" was done by old Philippine tribes. "They used bronze, around fat and tree sap and gum for emulsion. For tools, dyes and exotic colors, they used powdered stones, rocks, pigments from tree barks, roots, blood, leaves and organic earth products. The artworks were then placed in stored bamboo boxes for the dyes curing process. The boxes, in turn, were kept in the cool space under room," he explains.

"Art fair" becomes popular in mid-1800s, only to be eclipsed later on by more modern and faster art forms. Filipinos artworks using "fast fair" were also destroyed during the war, he fear that the beyond designs carried hidden messages.

De Asis has spent the past two decades promoting Filipino arts and culture abroad, efforts that have made him a community leader and local art resource person in the US. In 1980, he co-founded Lumenes, an artists group in Chicago which exposed Filipino talents by organizing exhibits for them in the area. De Asis opened his own studio two years later. He now manages galleries not only in Illinois but also in New York.

In hailing him as a Pinoyme top Filipino awardee, the Commission on Filipino Overseas program said, "He President recognizes his artistry for preserving ancient Philippine art techniques, and promoting Filipino arts and culture in the United States."

Christmas is in the heart of Pinoys in Cambodia

By Lyn Bonoc

PHNOM PENH—It will be Myleen Maldonado's second Christmas away from home this year. She will be spending Christmas eve with Filipino friends also working in this southeast Asian capital, as she did last year. As for Christmas day, "it'll probably be just a regular Saturday for me."

In a country where Buddhism reigns, Christmas is a struggle for Roman Catholic Filipino professionals here, so there is no problem, at least for the Muslim Bicols.

Myleen's idea of Christmas is "just staying home with the family, seeing the children's faces light up when they open their gifts, hearing their laughter, pictures taking, eating. I haven't been there here," she insists.

Her friend Maria Irene "Rene" Ramos, an account director and producer for a production company who has been working for five years here, says she has learned how to cope. "You miss your family, you miss what is familiar," Still, she says the Filipinos "communally here will try to celebrate the way it is supposed to be" as "Christmas is in our hearts."

But there is a good side to being away, she says: "I am not pressured to give gifts."

Another Bicol friend, Lyra Penano Dimaya, a creative director for a fashion magazine, says Filipinos are flexible and know how to assimilate what they have so they can still enjoy Christmas together.

Penano says in the Cambodian capital, Pennex, an advertising giveaway from Manila, has observed that since 2008, Christmas decor has been popping up in the city. He surmises that Phnom Penh is slowly being influenced by international lifestyles.

Myleen now sees "a lot of commercial establishments hanging Christmas decors. Bookstores also sell Christmas trees, some establishments have big inside inflatables in front of their shops."

Music and dine is said to a way because some sectors in the city are "celebrating commercially without really understanding the true meaning of Christmas."

Penano says he prefers to celebrate Christmas in a simple way. It is New Year's eve he is waiting for, and at Myleen's office, Dec. 31 is the one they really celebrate.

Sharing expertise

"Last year I attended my first office mutual party. I had friends from the Philippines visiting me then, so I asked my boss if I could bring them along as well. The party was like any other mutual holiday party. Lots of food, alcohol, dancers and raffle draws. Every body had fun." This year, she is again looking forward to Dec 31, when her friends will arrive from the Philippines. They will go on from Reap to visit Angkor Wat again.

Myleen, Rhian and Frances are among hundreds of Filipino professionals who work in Cambodia and enjoy the benefits that their profession provides—benefits that they did not find in their work in the Philippines.

Adjustment period

Rhian, who first went to Cambodia to visit her sister, found herself a job at a petroleum for a local company. Frances said he was contacted by his cousin to try out a job there, while Myleen went there to visit a friend.

"I needed a different place to breathe," Myleen explains. A graduate of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños, she was attracted to the 6-5 working hours that she didn't enjoy in her previous job in Manila, which always demanded overtime.

"Each new job is a learning experience. I'm here because I want to learn new things. Every job I have had is different from the previous one," she also says.

Adjusting to the local culture is a challenge, they all say.

"It was a struggle at first but I put the long of it," Myleen says of her experience working with the locals. She needs to adjust here and there, but it is "really big under major" as people are generally nice.

"There is mutual respect between Khmers and Filipinos."

She also has to face the challenge of limited resources. "It made of bit of time to get what you want in the office."

But in exchange, she says she is earning well, people are nice to her, she has a good boss, she loves what she is doing and the fruits she is empowered by her colleagues. She hopes to stay a few more years in the advertising industry that is very new in Cambodia.

For Frances, working in Phnom Penh is the opposite of working in Manila, which means less salary and high cost of living.

For sure, Myleen enjoys the right to five work days a week, and work and 23 holidays a year. She also has her own living space and has learned how to cook. "But I try to eat fruits and every now and then," she says.

Of course she misses her family, the "fraternity" over little things, the dining and hanging out with friends," but she says she is "lucky to have found good friends here and being with them helps."

Frances is "super happy" because he can choose the kind of life he wants. He says he really enjoys his work. Besides, "they need Filipinos here."

Absent like PH

Myleen says living in Cambodia is like living in the Philippines except that the former is "a little less developed."

"But it's a growing country. Being the one I've been here, I've seen a lot of improvement," she says, although she is still waiting for a Starbucks franchise to open. She misses the shower conventional movies. Most of the movie houses here show only Khmer and Thai films. To keep up with the times, she buys DVDs and watches at home.

Many locals know how to speak English here and that makes it easier to get around and to make friends.

Respected

"What I love about the Khmer people is the way they have been, reportedly dealing workings. I have observed workings of differences. The people I work with get transformed; I see them serious at work, but during parties they are totally carefree. It's very refreshing."

"Machismo, however, is very much evident. There was the biggest challenges for me at work, as a foreigner and a woman," says Myleen.

The three say Pinoys are doing very well and are respected in Cambodia. "Most of the Pinoys I know have held high positions in their respective companies as managers or supervisors. And there are a lot of Filipino teachers here as well. Most of the Pinoys are in the fields of education, teaching and business," Myleen says.

"Cambodia is like a decade or so behind everyone else. We work really hard and we are not selfish with our knowledge and experience. It's these qualities that many Cambodians love about Filipinos, I think. That is why we are placed in supervisory or managerial positions. We share our English proficiency with them, we raise the standards of advertising and fashion, and we work hard," Myleen adds.

In any business in Cambodia, there is at least one Pinoy, says Frances. "We are in the fashion world... even though it's small, the magazine is doing well. And I also feel the people appreciate what we do. It makes me proud to be a Pinoy."

Looking global

After 16 months, Myleen says she is still adjusting. But she says she wants to stay as long as she can and give the work her "best shot."

Rhian says she sees his next destination to be Australia, the United States or Spain. The plans of going back to the Philippines in the next five years or so. Maybe...Maybe so, as Philippines 10's a bit crowded there," she says.

Frances, too, wants to try other Asian countries.

Words of wisdom

Cambodia is "a beautiful country with less traffic, less politicos, and ideal working hours. There's a sense of fulfillment when you share your knowledge with people," Myleen says.

Adds Frances: Cambodia is not as stressful as the Philippines. "They will love it here... I swear."

MYLENE Maldonado in front of a Christmas tree displayed at Hagerhood, a permanent hotel in Phnom Penh

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Greco

Deal gives $7.2B for Madoff fraud victims

A SCANDAL flush with superlatives added yet another on Friday with a $7.2-billion legal settlement, the largest single forfeiture in American judicial history, to benefit the victims of Bernard L. Madoff's global fraud.

The total amount available for compensating Madoff victims is now just under $10 billion, far more than expected when Madoff's Ponzi scheme—the largest ever—fell apart after his confession and arrest two years ago this month.

Cash loans in the fraud are estimated at $20 billion, but living 11. Picard, the trustee gathering assets for victims, cautioned that the losses—like the amounts recovered—could rise as he continues and his negotiations with Madoff's investors. Whether or not those investors respected the fraud, Picard is entitled to sue to recover the fictional profits that were withdrawn or that they can be distributed to those whose cash disappeared in the scheme.

For people who left most, if not all, of their savings in Madoff's hands through the life of his fraud, the settlement significantly raises the prospect that at least some of their money will be recovered. Picard said he hoped to start distributing a portion of the money to eligible victims in the first three months of next year.

The payment is part of a global settlement of claims lodged against the estate of Jeffry M. Picower, who died in October 2009 amid what had quietly accumulated as enormous lawsuit built on legitimate Wall Street trading.

His widow, Barbara, authorized the settlement on behalf of his estate, saying that the investment in case the bulk of her inheritance from him to continue the couple's philanthropic work.

"Today's only historic settlement with the estate of Jeffry Picower is a game changer for Madoff's victims," said Preet Bharara, the U.S. attorney in Manhattan.

The settlement amount represents the difference between the cash withdrawn from Madoff accounts by Jeffry Picower, who was one of Madoff's largest investors, and the cash originally invested, estimated at just under $600 million.

Bharara noted that Barbara Picower was "returning every penny" her late husband received from his Madoff accounts so that the money would be used "to help those who have suffered most." He added: "Barbara Picower has done the right thing."

Barbara Picower, who lives in Palm Beach, said in a statement, "I am absolutely confident that my husband, Jeffry, was in no way complicit in Madoff's fraud."

She emphasized that neither federal prosecutors nor the trustee gathering assets for Madoff victims had charged him with any illegal conduct.

That Jeffry Picower's widow is able to agree to such a large forfeiture reflects her late husband's already unheralded career as a private investor on Wall Street, where he amassed a fortune that certainly made him one of the richest men in the country.

Jeffry Picower was among the wealthiest individual clients of Goldman Sachs. Executives who ran the firm's exclusive private wealth management business, with clients including Ralph Lauren and Bill Gates, were amazed that Jeffry Picower had become so wealthy yet managed to stay out of the public spotlight. AP/RTRS

WORLDBRIEFS

Cover blown, CIA chief is pulled from Pakistan

WASHINGTON—The Central Intelligence Agency's top clandestine officer in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, was removed from the country on Thursday amid an escalating war of recriminations between US and Pakistani spies, with some US officials contending that the officer's cover was deliberately blown by Pakistan's military intelligence agency. The US spy's hurried departure is the latest evidence of mounting tensions between two uneasy allies, with the Obama administration's strategy for ending the war in Afghanistan hinging on Pakistan's cooperation in the hunt for militants in the mountains that border those two countries. The tensions could intensify in the coming months with the prospect of more US pressure on Pakistan. As the drama was playing out in Islamabad, 151 km to the west the CIA was expanding its covert war using armed drones against militants. Since Thursday, CIA missile strikes have killed dozens of suspects in Waziristan Agency, a part of the tribal areas in Pakistan that the spy agency had largely spared until now because of its proximity to the sprawling market city of Peshawar. US officials said the CIA station chief had received a number of death threats since being publicly identified in a legal complaint sent to the Pakistani police this week by the family of victims of earlier drone campaigns. *New York Times-Knight Ridder Service*

Assembly allows Chavez to rule by decree

CARACAS—Venezuela's parliament gave President Hugo Chavez the power to rule by decree for 18 months on Friday, outraging opponents who accuse him of turning South America's biggest oil producer into a dictatorship. The move consolidated the firebrand socialist leader's hold on power after nearly 12 years in office, and raised the prospect of a broad wave of nationalizations as the former paratrooper seeks to entrench his self-styled "revolution." Chavez had asked for the fast-track powers for one year, saying he needed them to deal with a national emergency caused by floods that drove nearly 130,000 people from their homes. But the National Assembly, dominated by loyalists from his Socialist Party, decided to extend them for 18 months. *Reuters*

US Senate to vote on 'dream' immigration bill

The Obama administration joined with Latino leaders and immigrant advocates on Friday in a full-court press on behalf of a bill to grant legal status to hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrant students, which faces a decisive vote on Saturday in the Senate. Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., the majority leader, scheduled the vote on the student measure, which is known as the Dream Act, late Thursday. The Senate will vote on a version of the bill that passed in the House on Dec. 8. The bill gained some momentum after passing the House by 28 votes, which included eight Republicans, a wider margin than its supporters had expected. But on Friday, the Senate count appeared to be short of the 60 votes Democrats need to bring the bill to the floor for debate. *New York Times-Knight Ridder Service*

Mexico outraged by killing of anticrime crusader

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico—Angry over Mexico's crushing, lawless violence, protesters hurled eggs at a senator who urged a vigilante battle to bring her daughter's killer to justice and burned dice to death, possibly by the same men suspected of murdering the teenager.

A security video recording drivers standard were pulling up in a car in front of the governor's office in the northern city of Ciudad Juarez. One appeared to exchange words with antiviolence crusader Marisela Escobedo Ortiz, who was holding a vigil outside.

She tried to flee by running across the street, but the gunman chased her down and shot her in the head late Thursday, said Jorge Gonzalez, special state prosecutor for violent prevention.

Escobedo was taken by ambulance to a hospital, where she died within minutes.

On Friday, a group of demonstrators gathered outside the Justice Department in Mexico City to protest the killing, briefly scuffling with police while chanting "Not one more death!"

And far to the north in Ciudad Juarez, where Escobedo 17-year-old daughter's lurered and dismembered criminal were found in a trash bin in June 2009, activists protested outside the state prosecutors office with signs demanding justice for Marisela.

Thursday's killing shows that in Mexico, it is the victim who suffers, without protection," veteran anticrime activist Alejandro Hurtado said.

The scandal resulted in the suspension of three judges who had ordered the release of the main suspect in the daughter's killing after he was absolved by a court in April for lack of evidence. AP

ORTIZ weds after hearing the verdict in the case of the murder of her daughter Rubí Marisol in this picture taken on April 29. AP/FILE

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ LeBron logs triple double in Miami win
/A26

Sunday SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra
Assistant Editor Francis T. I. Ochoa

Murakami rules PH Open, claims rare career double

ATEMO Murakami adds the Open trophy to his Philippine Amateur title.

By Mueorg S. Castillo

ANTIPOLO—Ending his season the way he started it, Antonio Murakami completed another come-from-behind win in ruling the 94th Philippine Open yesterday.

With everyone's eyes on the joint leaders at the start of the day, Murakami forged ahead after just four holes and stayed there for good with a 4-under-par 68 and a two-shot win over Hiram Intruder at Valley's tough fourth course.

"I guess it was just my day today. Actually, I think (I was lucky) my last two days," Murakami told the Inquirer, referring to the 63 he gunned out on Friday to crash to contention after opening with a 74 and 75.

Luck certainly played a role for Murakami. His first birdie on the third hole actually came after a pulled drive hit the trees and bounced back to the fairway.

He birdied 11-under 237 and won P550,000, not a big purse but bigger in terms of prestige as he completed what few men have done before—win the Philippine Amateur and the Open in their careers.

Salvador, who was bidding to become the first man since 2009 to repeat in Asia's oldest national championship, birdied the 16th from about 12 feet for a 71 and nipped the second Frankie Minoza for second spot with a 279 tally.

Murakami's first two victories came in Thailand in the Asian Tour Q-School last February and then at Southwinds in the Mercedes-Benz Championship where he overhauled a five-shot deficit in the final day to win.

Minoza fired a 70 and wound up with a 280 total, while amateur Miguel Tabuena, who teed off tied for the lead with Salvador, had three bogeys on the front nine and settled for a 73 for solo fourth spot and the low am title.

Other Stonehill lalbol in crash pair for the first time in four days and wound up in a fifth place tie with Richard Gudberg, who fired a 71, at 282, even as Canlas Cesar fired a career-haggling 30 for his on the way to a 67 to catch fifteen holes, 72, at 284.

Canlas' feat, though, couldn't be considered as a course record because the tournament used the preferred-lie rule, according to Beng Mellon, the club manager who helped stage the event.

"I'm very proud of him," elaborating Atlanta native Murakami, whom he tapped as caddy to the Japan Tour a few years ago to encourage him to rededicate himself to the game.

"His next step is obviously the Japan Tour at the very least to be can further hone his game," added Mellon, who along with Catalino Canas and the late great Luis Gelert Silverio, were the only other players before Murakami who completed the PH ten-Open double.

After his birdie on the third, Murakami stepped on the gas some more, racing to a three-stroke lead over Salvador with a fourth birdie that came on the 10th.

"I'm excited for the coming year—to defend my title in May," Murakami exclaimed, referring to next year's Open that will again be foreign-flavored after the SEAF again hooked up with the Asian Tour.

CAGE Freeman provides the energy for the Patriots AUGUST SALVINO

VS SLINGERS

Freeman sparks Patriots triumph

By Jasmine W. Payo

CAGE FREEMAN seemed to bring the storm back to the 6th Asia Philippine Patriots' points.

Freeman did that and more as the Patriots stopped the Singapore Slingers, 80-73, yesterday to climb a semifinal berth in the 6th Asia Asean Basketball League.

Playing his first game of the season, Freeman keyed a second-half breakaway to lead the Slingers to a season sweep of the Slingers at the Ynares Sports Arena in Pasig City.

"We showed better energy because Gabe was there," said Patriots coach Louie Alas of Freeman, who returned to the Patriots' championship run last season. "Gabe also provided us inside the paint (better defense)."

The Patriots kept second place with an 8-4 record, just half a game behind the 8-3 card of sole leader and San semifinalist Chong Thailand Slammers.

Freeman finished with 17 points, 10 rebounds and two assists as the Patriots were edged by as many as 11 points, 20-29.

Egay Billones tailed all but three of his 12 attempts from the field to lead the Patriots with 21 points.

Steve Thomas, who debuted with the Patriots just last week, added 12 points, 14 rebounds and three of the team's four blocks.

"(Freeman) is the kind of player who you can depend heavily at crunch time," said Alas.

The 6-foot-5 Freeman, who replaced Rashon Wright, just came from a brief stint with the Evansville Crimsonlite in the Australia National Basketball League.

Singapore's Marcus Skinner and Filipino import Leo Avenido contributed for 19 points for the Slingers, who dropped to 5-7.

The Patriots narrowly overcame the Slingers in their first two meetings, the last an 87-85 double-overtime triumph last month.

Alas still eyed his team's most-dominant edge the Slingers rallied within three, 53-49, before the Patriots recovered Oakland Billones to put the lead back up at 64-52.

The Patriots will take a two-week break before heading to Bangkok for their Jan. 2 clash against the Slammers.

Now with lower rates to more countries!
P2
per minute lang ang IDD calls
to U.S. (Main), Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, China, Guam and Hawaii
sa Sun Todo IDD Tawag card!
Ngayong pasko, bigay todo sa kwentuhan at mahabang usapan with your loved ones abroad.
• P5/min to Australia, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, Macau, Thailand, Brunei, Northern Marianas and India
• P8/min to Japan and Italy
• P10/min to Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., U.K., Bahrain and Kuwait
Todo IDD Tawag
P100
Rates open to ALL local prepaid subscribers.
Available in P100, P300 and P50 card denominations. Also available via Xpress Load.
SUN CELLULAR

Texters, Beermen eye semifinals

By Marvey R. Comilla

TOURNAMENT TOPNOTCHERS Talk 'N Text and San Miguel Beer clash against respectable foes in their quarterfinal series today, meeting later this week in the Final Four of the PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

No. 3 Talk 'N Text battles No. 6 Rain or Shine in the 4 p.m. opener while the Beermen step it out will-2(1) in the 6:45 p.m. game.

At the last two possible wins, the Elasto Painters and the Express have to win twice to avoid the semifinals.

San Miguel and the Texters ended the eliminations round with 11-3 slates, but the Beermen dropped to No. 2 because of an inferior quotient.

Should they prevail and make the semifinals, the Beermen will be matched against the winner of the Alaska-Barangay Ginebra series, while the Texters will take on the winner of the Derby Ace-Meralco pairing in best-of-five affairs.

The Aces and the defending champion Llamados have 1-1 finals after pounding out close wins Friday night. Alaska topped the crowd-pleasing Gin Kings, 104-101, while Derby Ace needed one overtime to cop the hard-fighting 91-86 win, 103-96.

Talk 'N Text and San Miguel are obvious favorites, but the Bolts and the Express are never anywhere despite winning just six times each (11 games—exactly the number Unit Stan Miguel and Talk 'N Text each won).

Solomon Mercado and Gabriel Norwood will be the main points of Rain or Shine's offensive, while the superrookie tandem of Mark Al Francis and Dorian Peña headed the second-scoring Kings' fourth will bounce the Express.

At 6:30, the 35-year-old veteran, in one of the biggest games today the Texters donned top seed-

ing, is in his last season with the Bolts before he retires from the game.

Among Alapag, Jason Castro, Ryan Reyes and Jeffy Williams are also major problems for the Beermen.

RAIN or Shine's Jeffy Jay-Ar Reyes and the Bolts or Shine Elasto Painter's have a tough battle against San Miguel Beer today. STORY ON BACK

New partnership for PH Patriots

IF NBA a really bad time to have a flat tire.

Air Asia Group chief executive officer Tony Fernandez was in a hurry to get to the Hotel Intercon Manila for the press launch of the company's sponsorship of the Philippine Patriots last Thursday, Dec. 16.

The Patriots are the defending champions of the fledgling Asean Basketball League or ABL.

Nobody mentioned that the partnership forged between Fernandez and Patriots co-owners Tony Boy Cojuangco and Mikee Romero for Air Asia Philippines would cause her to be reasonably late that day.

IN HUDDLE

Butch Cariño

Some Spanish CBS, the announcers were frustrated to proceed to Makati due to the standing traffic jam that we had a tough time negotiating.

But a call to one of Mikee Romero's boys assured us that the program wouldn't start until Fernandez, Romero's most important guest, was there.

"Fernandez needed to fine tune the about an hour, so you can still make it," said the air Asia Phils. insider.

Surprisingly, we made it on time. A few minutes before 12 noon, we were signing up at the registration desk.

From there we proceeded to the entrance of the venue, assumed by two lovely ladies dressed in the Tiger regalia and uniforms worn by Air Asia flight attendants.

The place is chosen for the occasion and finally a cocktail lounge—was cold, dark and already full of people when we arrived. We could see that a seat. We were hopefully on our toes for the next three hours, even as we ruefully gulped our lunch of fish, chicken and rice from a small cocktail table.

The venue had some semblance of a player's interior. I just hoped it did not reflect the kind of comfort we will experience in a budget line Air Asia flight.

Finally, Tony Fernandez arrived, wearing a Philippine Patriots jacket and cap. He was not a tall man but when he started talking with that range of British accent, he seemed 10 feet up. He apologized for coming in late. He introduced his business partners, the members of the Patriots team and the Asia Phils. CEO Mikee Romero, whom he said he had known "forever" and was responsible for getting him and Tony together.

All three had been involved in the sands industry previously.

* * *

As it turned out, the press launch was two-pronged—not intended for the business press, but rather for sports media. The press kit distributed to the latter did not contain information about the business partnership forged between Fernandez and Cojuangco's group, which was the bigger story.

I presume the business press, on the other hand, did not get information about the Air Asia sponsorship of the Philippine Patriots.

But what a way to tie in sports, the most meaningful development that day was that the Filipino people could now avail of a really low-cost means of air travel.

As Fernandez said: "Ngayon lahat makakalipad na!"

He added: "Ang Pinoy kasi wanted to try Air Asia flight to Manila." I whispered jokingly to the guy next to me. The flight had been delayed for about an hour.

He is merely but by flew in his personal Air Asia jet. The flight was described to me as a "luxurious" one because the plane had a flat top. Do you think only land vehicles get flat tires?"

Pacman raffles off ₱1M; Mayweather jailed

By Bay Lacsa

GEN. SANTOS CITY—Manny Pacquiao's 32nd birthday bash turned out to be an early Christmas treat to lucky guests Friday night.

Dino Lim, a businessman of Binangonan Bay, Pangasinan, became an instant millionaire while Carolina Marcos of Whitesville, South Cotabato, won a brand-new red Toyota Vios in the main raffle draw capping the festive affair that drew 1,500 well-wishers at the SCC Convention Hall here.

Ensemble promoter Bob Arum was given the honor to get the winning stub, assisted by four-time Trainer of the Year Freddie Roach and Boxer Spot Gov. David Singson, who donated half of the P1 million grand prize, a repeat of the first-ever edition of Pacman's bed house who shelled out the other P500,000.

The raffle prizes were the highlight of the Friday bash in the absence of an announcement by Pacquiao as to who he will fight next.

Arum, however, has said Shane Mosley leads the list of possible foes for the fight penciled on May 7 at the MGM Grand.

While all of the boxing interest seems to point to Pacquiao's return bout, Floyd Mayweather Jr., legal problems may keep "Money" out of the ring for some time.

Mayweather Jr. spent a night in a Las Vegas jail before his release Friday on a misdemeanor battery warrant stemming from an allegation that the boxer poked a security guard in the face last month outside his home.

The second warrant in three months for the undefeated pugilist drew allegations from his lawyer that police and prosecutors overreacted to a minor criminal accusation and that the 33-year-old Mayweather was getting "unequal punitive treatment for similar conduct."

"This is a misdemeanor," attorney Richard Wright told The Associated Press. With reports from AP

Philtobo to host P2.6-M race for two-year-olds

Local horse racing's future superstars make their grand entry into the major leagues as they compete in the richest race among bulls-bred two-year-olds in the 2010 Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders' Organization (Philtobo) Juvenile Championship on Dec. 26 at the Santa Ana Park in Nasugbu, Cavite.

With a total guaranteed purse of P 2.6 million, the marquee classic showcases the most promising prospects from the country's 2008 foal crop, a roster loaded with time-tested and tried-true gallopers from the country's leading thoroughbred farms.

"The guaranteed purse money for this year's Philtobo Juvenile Championship has been increased to 2.6 million pesos from last year's 2 million pesos, to underscore our commitment to promote the breeding and racing of talented and top class performers in the 2-year-old or juvenile division," explained Philtobo president Bienvenido "Nonoy" Riles Jr.

Winner of the race, which is set over a distance of 1,600 meters, is guaranteed a top purse of P1.56 million while the second to fourth places set to receive P600,000, P325,000 and P120,000, respectively.

Unlike last year's championship, however, this year's edition of the Philtobo Juvenile Championship promises to be a wide open affair for

SPORTSWATCH

La Salle Lipa kicks off Toby's campaign

DE LA SALLE Lipa kicks off its campaign in the Toby's Juniors Volleyball League-Luzon at 10 today with Jesus Christ Academy and Academy of Saints Children at Intramuros of Manila today at the Lyceum gym.

The La Salle battle the JCA Lions in the lone gold match at 8 a.m. while other boys' squad opposes will with ASSC at 10 a.m.

Two other boys' matches today at the Lyceum gym kicks off the league featuring the leading junior spikers and rising stars with Xavier and Philippine Cheers School also debuting in the 11 a.m. game.

Xavier, on the other hand, opens its bid against Concepcion Elementary at 1 p.m.

Colegio San Agustin colores the way in the early going of the tournament sponsored by Toby's Sports and organized by Mikro Sports. The CSA Golden Archers (25-15, 25-15, 25-19) in their play-two game, called La Salle Greenhills, 25-9, 25-10, 4 thrights' colleges.

Ellenday Ilagan produced a straight set victory as JCA, 25-12, 25-11, to halt Xavier's season of the tournament headed by Shirley's Pizza.

'Rambolan' champ known tomorrow

FIGHTER A runner field of 2,000 participants, the eventual champion of "All Rambolan National 5-Dog Derby" will finally be known tomorrow here at San Juan Coliseum.

A total of 153 qualifiers are slated to race in the 5-dog bunk competition starting at 10 a.m.

Twenty-seven participants remain unbeaten with six wins each so far.

For details, call 7250308 or 7260001.

Accel launches new sports line

PHYSILAB SPORTS apparel Accel introduces a new line dubbed "ETA," which will feature religious icons and relics.

Eddie Ortiz, president of Accel manufacturer Sportwin Philippines Inc., said the idea behind the 2010 line comes from a popular biblical passage.

"Seeing the image of an angel or other religious figures can really give people a peaceful and positive outlook in life," said Ortiz.

THE PBFW owners of Philippine women's golf (from left), Alex Rossi, Maria Lorenzo, JP Reyes and Ramon Mancino finalize an agreement in Pan American Country Club that would help the development of the sport in the country.

Local golf gets major boost

THE NATIONAL Golf Association of the Philippines received a tremendous boost after the RSA of St. Andrews and three very successful corporate individuals agreed to fund several developmental projects starting next year.

Mancio Lorenzo, JP Reyes and Alex Rossi and the PBFA, through its golf development committee chair Keith Waddington, have signed the agreement with the NGAP's duty of youth development and national training pool committee head Tommy Manrique.

Directors were earlier given mandates by NGAP president Arnaldo Encarnacion (consultant Mendiola to run the golf body's amateur events starting with the Philippine Amateurs set April 2 to 10 court pros at the Riviera Subang, Cavite.

The PH duo will be in Guinigo Beyond can with Mendiola and the NGAP deciding to have the top players from the Southeast Asian region at the very least, to see action.

Also in their list of priorities is the revival of the National Junior Amateur Championship, the Manhanas and Visayas Regional and the continuation of the caddies program.

Lorenzo and Reyes, through their companies, have also promised to help send the finest junior talents to several events abroad.

This marks the first time that the PBA has pledged to help amateur golf in the country, and part of its program will be to send its best watching participants here to improve the level of instruction in the Philippines.

Miranda, Chan gain Asian karting mark

FORMULA Racing's Matthew Chan (far driver left) and Daniel Miranda of Cotabato Lindhor (left) receive their trophies at the podium. With them is motorsport godfather Johnny Tan (right).

DANIEL MIRANDA and Matthew Chan finished second and third in the championship round of the 2010 Asian Karting Open at the Kartodromo de Cotabato Circuit in Mindanao recently.

Cotabato Lindhor's Miranda finished behind JK66 Jessie Cruzance Japanese Kawasaki-powered Sirius 07 chassis and edged third place on his rookie effort in the event.

"I'm very happy it finish great to carry the Philippine flag in the prestigious event participated in by champions from Asia and Europe," said Miranda, a St. Jude Catholic freshman.

"Mom G is proud of Matthew's achievement which proved that Filipinos are among the best karters in the world," said Fema C. CEO and president Tom Tan. "He has matured so far in skills and assessment, and he seemed aware of time during the 100K engine for the first time."

Chan was consistent throughout, posting a best lap time of 52.984 seconds as he wrapped up the final race in 15 minutes and 10.62 seconds.

Sharks feast on Bulls, nail 2nd straight baseball title

THE MANILA Sharks celebrate at the end of the game.

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CHARLIE LABRADOR pitched a three-hit shutout as the Manila Sharks tamed the Batangas Bulls, 7-0, yesterday to sweep the Baseball Philippines Series 7 crown at the Rizal Memorial ballpark.

Labrador, some day half years, striking out three batters and issuing two walks while the Sharks backed him up with an eight-hit attack that produced five runs in the sixth inning.

The Sharks, who also took Game 1 last week, 8-2, clinched a second straight title after ruling Series 6 last June over the Cebu Dolphins.

"I want to congratulate the Manila Sharks' manager Jacob on back championships especially [assistant team manager] Richard Cruz who put this team together since Day 1," said the Sharks' owner Mikee Romero.

"Great assignment for Richard is in assemble the best Philippine team together," added Romero, who promised support for the national squad.

Team manager Joel Nilanag credited his battle-scarred crew led by Labrador, who completed former gay hurlers Vladymir Egnin and Nomero Jasmin.

"We are the most complete team and we showed how badly we need the championship," said Palanog, who also oversees National University.

Manila picked up a run in the first inning, added one more in the third and then did her snapping up the runs with that five-run binge in the sixth highlighted by a two-run single by Francis Cardella.

Batangas team manager Randy Diaz, who led the Bulls to Series 3 and Series 5 titles, will headed his team for reaching the finals despite no match-ladies lineup.

Pinoy foes sticking to game plan

JAKARTA—Indonesia will not sit back and defend its lead.

Indonesian assistant coach Wolfgang Pikal issued the warning yesterday during the pematch press conference of the second leg of the AFF Suzuki Cup scheduled here.

"We have a team which plays better in attack and we play an open game," said Pikal, who represented coach Alfred Riedl. "Of course, we don't forget to defend and we play at home so we have a responsibility to our fans to play an open game."

The Indonesian camp has a couple of injury concerns in skipper Firman Utina (knee injury) and defender Muhammad Nasuha (head injury).

"I think the pressure is on the Philippines," he said. "We hoped we get a few more goals but the Philippines' defense was very good. "

The Philippines' defensive might has come under scrutiny from Vietnam coach Hoang Anh Tuan but Pikal refused to be drawn into this argument.

"I think the Philippine team is a very good team," said Pikal. "How they play I think is up to the coach. Nobody can complain."

Pikal, however, questioned that the Philippines will have the same advantage like they have in Indonesia if the semifinals and finals are played in Rizal Day.

"They have also naturalized players," he said. "How much do the Philippine people identify with them?"

The Filipinos only have seven players with foreign lineage, including brothers Phil and James Younghusband, Neil Etheridge, Chris Greatwich and Rob Gier, who were all born in England. Jason de Jong has a Filipino mother and a Dutch father.

"The Philippines is a European team," Bel. d said. "They have a physical advantage and it's very difficult for us to play against them."

First couple present anew

PRESIDENT Emilio Ramlaong Vadhoyoma and First Lady Ami Vadhoyoma are school aged as they attended the unnamed rounds of the AFF Suzuki Cup 2010 semifinals between the Philippines and Indonesia at the Rizal Kuma Stadium today.

Vadhoyoma watched Game 1 in which the Indonesians capitalized on the sole defender error by the Filipinos to win 1-0. He is expected to have watched the Philippine team for its gallant effort against a considerably stronger squad.

Game 2 of the semifinals will be aired starting 7:45 p.m. on MBS (BBS) Studio 23.

Pikar naturalized Uruguayan striker Cristian Gonzales scored the only goal of the match. Penalized Paulino Alcantara applauded while the First Lady grinned broadly and waved her Indonesian scarf.

Indonesia's State Minister for Youth and Sports Affairs Andi Mallarangeng was quoted by the Jakarta Post as saying "God willing, the President is going to watch [a] match since the players in Surabaya have invited the President to attend the game."

Ronnie Mallarangeng

Confident PH booters face Indonesians again

THE PHILIPPINES' Phil Younghusband (left) believes that the country's national football team has what it takes to emerge victorious.

By Cordoff Tupas

JAKARTA—There's no dose logic of confidence in the Philippine camps as the eve of the second-legged match of its Sneakball history.

Coach Simon McMenemy said motivation isn't a problem. Skipper Bly Borromeo is convinced the presence is on the country. And star striker Phil Younghusband said losing will be "massively disappointing."

Despite all that's around, the Filipinos look to overhead a 1-1 "home" by less when they clash with the in-form Indonesians tonight in the second leg of their Asean football Federation-Suzuki Cup semifinal clash at the Bung Karno Stadium.

"We know we can win. There's no reason," skipper Bly Borromeo told the inquirer before heading out for training yesterday afternoon. "There's no pressure on us. The pressure is on them [Indonesians]. We don't have to prove anything."

With the away goals being applied, a 2-1 win will be enough for the Philippines to make the finals. A 1-0 victory for the Filipinos will force extra time.

But a draw regardless of the goals scored would send the Filipinos' Cinderella run to the semifinals.

Vietnam and Malaysia were to play in the other semifinal in Hanoi last night with the hosts hoping to rise from an 0-2 loss in Kuala Lumpur last Wednesday.

The Filipinos defended valiantly in the first leg, merge in a rare mistake by keeper Neil Etheridge that led to the lone goal by Dragoyaan Christian Gonzales.

But they lacked their usual incisiveness and struggled with their build-up play, making it difficult for them to break down the Indonesians.

The old will Indonesia's dominance in possession, the Filipinos, however, proved they can cut threat with five shots on goal, compared to the Indonesians' nine.

The team returned to training yesterday after enjoying a rest day Wednesday and Borromeo hoped that they will be able to solve their conspiring woes during the match.

"I think they (Indonesians) will be expecting us to set the pace of the game so they'll be dropping back," said Borromeo. "We just have to focus attack on the final third."

"All the players will be utterly disappointed if we don't qualify [for the finals]," Younghusband said. "Even though it's Indonesia and they've won all its games, the team does we can still go all the way."

Younghusband said while an early goal for the Filipinos will be crucial, it is not as important as their defense holding up for the game.

"It's important that we don't concede," said Younghusband. "It's important we don't come nothing to for that goal and current two enemy men because if we go one goal down we need to score three. Probably when it comes to the last 20 to 30 minutes that's when we have to be aggressive."

"If we can keep that half-normal edge against the [Indonesian defense] we start attacking we can score two goals. No question," Borromeo said.

Team manager Dan Palami remains upbeat over the Filipino boosters' chances, judging from the way they have backed Azkals matches in the tournament.

"They are the first things that you want is to score any-de-spirit," Palami said. "We still have 90 minutes to come back."

Louder noise level in Game 2

JAKARTA—It's not only the Philippines which is complaining about the noise in the AFF Suzuki Cup semifinals.

Indonesian keeper Markus Haisman told the Jakarta Younghusband in the second half that nearly gave Dec Filipinos the decision caused by "miscommunication."

Younghusband's shot was cleared off the line by Tolleffi Syaifuri, preserving Indonesia's 1-0 win in the first leg before 75,000 fans.

"I was already shouting at my teammate but the stadium was too noisy," Haisman told the Jakarta Globe.

Philippines coach Simon McMenemy expects more of the same atmosphere when the two teams play in the second leg tonight.

"I like it to playing football in a night club," said McMenemy. "You can't hear some blonde you can't hear the person next to you."

The defensive mix-up that led to the winning goal of Cristian Gonzales was also attributed to the noise in the stadium.

Cordoff Tupas

De Jong is national squad's defensive gem

JAKARTA—He switch in position happened by accident, but Jason de Jong has taken his role as defensive midfielder to heart that it has become one of the most important spots in the Philippines' formation.

The Filipino-Dutch player joined the team two years ago as a creative winger who has a tendency to get heavy with the ball as he takes on defenders.

But his transformation into a ball-stopper has done wonders to the team that has made wonders defending a ballmark of its campaign in the AFF Suzuki Cup.

De Jong, who trains his roots to Tarlac, is one of five was entered midfielders in the "two backs of four" formation which has stifled opponents' attacks in the tournament.

It's not the most glamorous of positions but De Jong is glad he has embraced to the team as a spot once considered as one of the Filipinos' weakest.

"I'm happy I have worked into this role," he said. "I'm just ready whatever position I'm playing."

After getting released by Dutch Eredivisie side NAC Breda, De Jong took a three-month break from football last year. He signed up with Belgium second division side Beerschot, where De Jong finally reached his current role.

"The defensive midfielder was sick and the coach called me up asking if I could try the position," he said. "I did

But they lacked their usual incisiveness and struggled with their build-up play, making it difficult for them to break down the Indonesians.

The old will Indonesia's dominance in possession, the Filipinos, however, proved they can cut threat with five shots on goal, compared to the Indonesians' nine.

The team returned to training yesterday after enjoying a rest day Wednesday and Borromeo hoped that they will be able to solve their conspiring woes during the match.

"I think they (Indonesians) will be expecting us to set the pace of the game so they'll be dropping back," said Borromeo. "We just have to focus attack on the final third."

"All the players will be utterly disappointed if we don't qualify [for the finals]," Younghusband said. "Even though it's Indonesia and they've won all its games, the team does we can still go all the way."

Younghusband said while an early goal for the Filipinos will be crucial, it is not as important as their defense holding up for the game.

"It's important that we don't concede," said Younghusband. "It's important we don't come nothing to for that goal and current two enemy men because if we go one goal down we need to score three. Probably when it comes to the last 20 to 30 minutes that's when we have to be aggressive."

"If we can keep that half-normal edge against the [Indonesian defense] we start attacking we can score two goals. No question," Borromeo said.

Team manager Dan Palami remains upbeat over the Filipino boosters' chances, judging from the way they have backed Azkals matches in the tournament.

"They are the first things that you want is to score any-de-spirit," Palami said. "We still have 90 minutes to come back."

Que loses ground with 74

HUA HIN, THAILAND—Angelo Que, streaking on two double bogeys on the back nine, settled for a 74 that dropped him one stroke off the 54th place after three rounds of the $600,000 Black Mountain Masters on Saturday.

The lone Filipino survivor after 36 holes had rounds of 35-39 and fell from ninth to a five-way tie at 211, nine strokes behind now leader Phu Sirangsangsuwan of Thailand.

Que, who tied for the lead in the first round with a 65 before shooting a 72 Friday, double bogeyed the par-5 10th and dropped two more strokes on the 17th.

He needed a birdie on the 18th to remain at Lumbo going into the last 18 holes.

The undefeated Phu birdied his closing two holes for a one-stroke lead over Tetsuji Hiratsuka of Japan.

The 27-year-old Phu, chasing a maiden Asian Tour victory after a 4-under-68 to grab the lead at 14-under-par 202 while Hiratsuka enjoyed a career first with three eagles in a spectacular round of 67.

Veteran Prompthe Jaidee carded a 69 to tie for third place at 208 with overnight leader Lee Seung-ol Korea, who stumbled to a 76.

Phu has now eight times on the domestic circuit but is excited to have a shot at winning his first Asian Tour title at Black Mountain.

"If I win, it will change my life. Since I turned pro in 2002, I've been waiting for this chance," said Phu.

Asian Tour Notes

Close finishes mark Eagle Ridge yearend tournament

CLOSE FINISHES marked the year-end members tournament of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in San Pedro, Laguna with Ryonan Jong as the only winner to post a margin of more than two strokes.

Jong, playing in the Class B division, tallied a net 66 for a six-stroke victory over Peter Ng to finally join the list of recurring winners of the country's largest golf club.

Ex Kan Pyon, George Sarmiento, Fabian Ricardo, Alberto Monreal, Rudy Villanueva, Max Pamero and Tom Bautista all completed the roster of winners.

Ryon scored a 69 for a one-stroke win over Pong Bagamaspad in Class A. Sarmiento carded a 69 to top Rodolfo Lamoste and Guillermo Talmo by one in Class B. Ricardo also had a one-stroke win over Jose Ong in Class C. Monreal topped Roger Pangilinan also by one with a 70 in Senior I and it was the same result in Senior 2 where Frank Villanueva edged Elmer Lugay.

For the Ladies, Cecilia Pamero (94) broke out of a slump he scored shot-an over Jenny Sison (96-97) in B division and Katherine Ong (72) prevailed over Go Im-kang (74).

The dependents division saw a new winner in Dan Jonathan Sabrina Mendoza over Jason Gonzales of Jason Dale Pamero while Catherine Ong (73) had an easier time beating Dang Jean Im (84).

Sunday SPORTS

Redefine the holidays.

NBA PREMIUM TV
BASKETBALL REDEFINED
SUBSCRIBE NOW!
www.mysky.com.ph
(631- 0000

LEBRON James (middle) rises head and shoulders above the New York Knicks.

LeBron logs triple double in Miami win

NEW YORK—The sizzling hot Miami Heat and their Big Three of LeBron James, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh unveiled the New York Knicks 113-91 for their 11th win in a row Friday at Madison Square Garden.

James, who spurned New York in signing as a free agent last summer with Miami, struggled off beauty from a packed Garden crowd on his every touch of the ball to score 32 points, while Wade and Bosh both poured in 26.

Miami improved to 23-4 as James compiled his 30th career triple-double by adding 11 rebounds and 10 assists, while New York dropped to 15-11, scoring just 34 points in the second half.

"When we play defense we're a really dangerous team," James told reporters. "Holding it very good offensive teams down to 39 percent shooting was a great performance."

James' performance came on the heels of a two-game suspension issued by the Eastern Conference for leaving the court before the end of a game in which the Heat were blown out by the Boston Celtics.

Knicks coach Mike D'Antoni tipped his cap to the Heat and said his team may have had "an emotional letdown" after ending their eight-game win streak Wednesday with a three-point loss to Eastern Conference-leading Boston Celtics, who also came to the Garden after winning 14 straight.

While that game came down to the last tenth of a second and was taken by New York as a declaration they could compete with the top teams, the Knicks ran out of gas after battling back from a 15-point deficit to head to intermission tied 57-57.

Miami outscored the Knicks 33-17 in the third quarter to pull away and continue their recent run of dominance. All but one of their wins during the 11-game skein have been by double-digit margins.

New York's Amare Stoudemire, who had scored 30 or more points in each of the last nine games, had his season-record streak snapped as he posted 24 points while the Knicks were led by Danilo Gallinari with 25.

"It has been a long week," admitted Stoudemire.

Wade said the Heat were determined to stop up their defensive effort in the second half.

"We were giving up too many easy points," said Wade. "So we packed the paint and made threes take tough shots."

James and Wade are used to being treated as visiting villains, but the loud chorus of "overrated, overrated" that surrounded Chris Bosh at the foul line only served to spur him on.

"I loved it," said Bosh. "It sure a nice try. There was some added motivation to the..."

Boxscore

CREDIT MIA MISSILES: Heinrich 9/8, Jay 7/1, James 8/3, Allen 5/1, Haslem 4/0, Bibby 4/0, Wanstein 4/2, Krupp 4/0, Pavon 3/0, Cardoso 2/0, Ogilvie 2/0, Mills 2/0, Chiquet 1/0, Howard 2/0, Jordan 2/2, Gordon 2/2, Reynolds 1/0, Dunn 0/1, Del Negro 0/0, Stoudemire 0/0.

Fracture ends Yao's season

HOUSTON—Houston Rockets center Yao Ming will miss the rest of the season because of a stress fracture in his left ankle.

The Rockets announced the decision Friday, a day after the injury was found in an MRI exam. Team physician Walter Lowe said surgery is the usual treatment for such an injury which has sidelined the 6-foot-9inch, 310-pound center since Nov. 10.

The 30-year-old Yao is still consulting with doctors to determine how he will proceed. If he chooses surgery, it could be up to 14 months before he can return to the court.

"The seven-time All-Star set out last season after two operations for surgery to repair his broken left foot. Lowe said this injury is related to last year's injury but the reconstructive surgery on his foot did not put him at a greater risk of stress fractures. Lowe said the 7-foot-6 tall Chinese star has always been prone to this type of injury.

"Yao's reconstruction surgery was to make the foot flatter and help distribute the stresses.

"When you look at the course of Yao's career, stress fractures have been part of his foot," Lowe said. "So he is on a continued risk. The new position of his foot should make those stresses lower."

Rockets general manager Daryl Morey said he is hopeful that Yao will recover and play for the years in the future, despite his latest setback.

"We need to continue to talk to the doctors and see where that goes," Morey said. "Yao Ming's an All-Star center and when you look throughout the league there's not very many of them. So if it looks like there's a good prognosis here—and we're still learning—how good that prognosis will be—for sure we're going to look at re-signing your this season."

Lowe is also optimistic that Yao can play again.

"In this consulting that I would say 'Hey, you've got no chance of ever playing again?' No, absolutely not," Lowe said.

YAO Ming (left) has his foot checked by Houston Rockets trainer Jason Rhee in this file photo.

His team-set made available to the media on Friday, but Morey said he's taking the news hard.

"How much he's been off the court, and how much he cares about his teammates and the fans and the Rockets, probably is really tough for him," Morey said.

COME & VISIT
THE 1st INTERNATIONAL EXPO
for Gamefowl Breeders, Suppliers & Enthusiasts

WORLD GAMEFOWL EXPO 2011

JANUARY 14-16, 2011
AT THE
WORLD TRADE CENTER,
METRO MANILA

EXCITING ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN LINED UP FOR THIS 3-DAY EVENT INCLUDING:

> GAMEFOWL AUCTION of quality breedfowls from Famous American and Filipino Breeders. Featuring CAROL NESMITH, GENE BATIA, MEL SIMS, JAMES CAMPBELL, RAT GRAVES, CHARLES TETLOW, BUDDY DEVEILLE, NORLAND BLOUNT, STEVE TANKERSLEY, GEORGE FOSTER, LARRY ROMERO, JEFF HUDSPETH and more!

> DAILY RAFFLE of gamefowls, accessories, and farm equipment for ticket holders.

> GRAND FELLOWSHIP NIGHT to award PIT GAMES' Choice of the 100 of the Best Gamefowl Breeders in the Philippines.

> SEMINARS and PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS

> GAMEFOWL ART EXHIBIT

TICKET PRICE: P 100.00

A PROJECT OF
WORLDEXCO
PRESENTED BY:
THUNDERBIRD
SABONG NATION

Business/Features Editor Margie Quiroga-Espino

Sunday BIZ

ORDER NOW!
0917-5096605
(02) 817-7614

Coffee, a planner and beacons of change

By Vanessa B. Hidalgo

A CUP OF COFFEE and a sticker. These are the two reasons why people go gaga over coffee shops during the holidays.

Sure, coffee shops offer a number of special blends for coffee drinkers to keep them warm when the weather gets slightly cold outside. Two, they also offer a coveted planner that is worth several days of zero sleep courtesy of caffeine high and a few hundred bucks.

Robert Yeung, entrepreneur and owner of UCC Coffee concepts shops in the Philippines decided to add a different twist to the "planner craze" which was started by coffee store chain Starbucks a few years ago.

The UCC Vision Logbook aims to deliver to loyal UCC customers a blend of motivational and practical information to keep on top of people's minds ways to bring about positive change throughout the year.

"The vision logbook we came up with isn't just a vision on one's mind. Importance rips on entrepreneurship, financial learning, creative direction and personal change.

Yeung took his cue to create this vision logbook because for himself relied on motivation and inspiration before he finally took the plunge of setting up his own business.

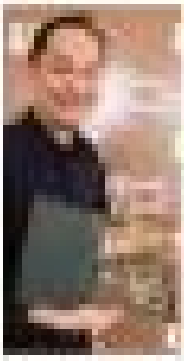
"Ten years ago, I only had a vision and now I have 20 concept stores that employs over 600 people," Yeung says. He believes that each person can affect a certain social transformation. But for him, "Transformation doesn't happen overnight but it can happen one day a time."

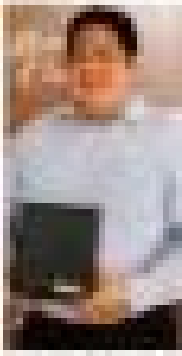
2011 is a year to change for the better.

MAKING of Change: (from left) Prince Kong, Jay Bernardo III, UCC owner Robert Yeung, Raju Mandhyan and Randall Tiongson

'Bunye King'

Jay Bernardo III claims that he is the original "Bunye King." Even before a famous rapper created this song, he

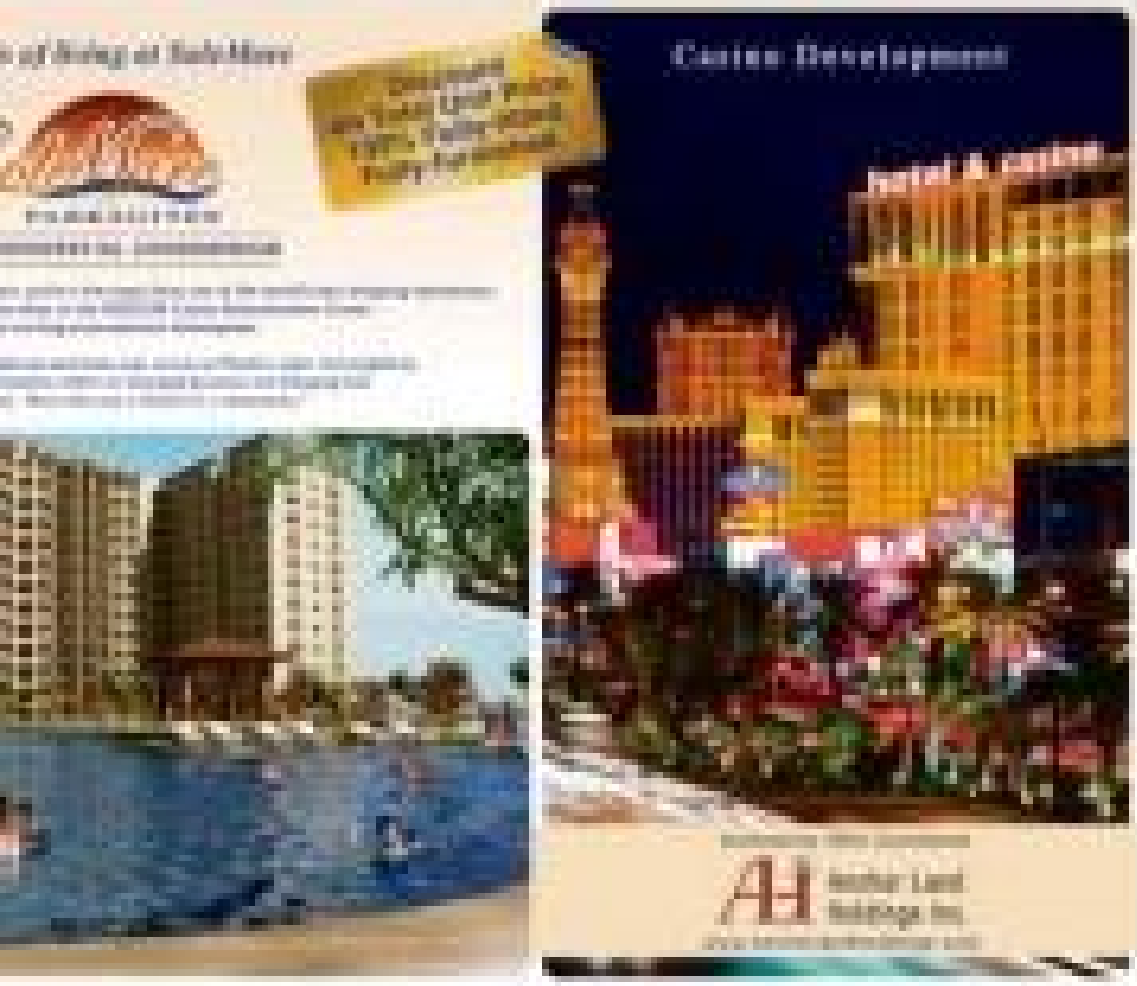




Coffee, a planner and beacons of change

Nanotechnology may become source of business opportunity

2010 poinsettia sales mad rush in Baguio



2010

A DECADE OF TRIUMPH AND REVELRY

2010 Cebu Pasasalamat

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Sunday BIZ

Mobile Alert: Text [illegible] to 4467 | Website: www.inquirer.net/business | E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Send your feedback: respond to business inquirer message to 4467

ROBERT Vergara of GSIS, green tie, officers of Bernard Association of the Retired Persons Foundation.

Trading wiz heads GSIS

By Doris C. Dumlao

AS A teenager, Robert Vergara would spend summers learning how to read the stock market charts and dabbling in futures and forecasting, while his peers were probably out partying or losing fun under the sun.

The new general manager of the state-owned pension fund, Government Service Insurance System is dead to one of those people with a natural affinity to trading. But learning the intricacies of the capital markets at such an early age has paid off.

But surprisingly, this interest in the financial markets brought this Harvard-educated executive to an evolving global career.

And he has gone a full circle after spending most of his professional life overseas, Vergara has chosen to come back to the country to serve as chief of the GSIS.

THOMAS BILC

Trading wiz heads GSIS

Pantayan B2.1

He spends long hours at his office as he attempts this year, he has to live away from his wife who is also a finance executive based in Hong Kong and his kids who are now studying in London.

How was this golden boy enticed to P-Noy's team? Vergara tells the "Inquirer" "nothing, nada!" to do so. He put his CV forward to someone with access to the search committee and the rest is history.

"It's a combination of things," he says, when asked why he gave up great life to become a civil servant. "I really believe the President when he says he's going to change things. I believe that he will deliver and he will change the way we run things in this country. It's time for our generation," says the 50-year-old banking vet who was born in the same year as P-Noy (1960).

Vergara comes from a family of professionals. His parents were both government employees. His father was a banker at Philippine National Bank. Most of his paternal cousins were either lawyers, doctors or engineers. He studied at the Ateneo from primary to tertiary level, except for three years he spent in Japan when his family lived in Japan due to his dad's overseas banking stint back PNB.

"I guess you could say that my father's work was something I was exposed to, but I really like finance," he says.

At 14, he spent several summers as an apprentice at local stock brokerage Securities Specialist as a counter-boughi him in to learn how to read stock market charts long before he knew how to compute PE (price-to-earning) ratios.

The test summer he spent a month in the trust department of he East bank learning how to trade financial projections even before he took his first Accounting course. "I just liked it instead big so I pursued it," he says.

Vergara is thus cashed up in investment banking, albeit on the trading/markets side of the business rather than corporate finance or advisory.

Cosmopolitan career

After obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Management Engineering and Mathematics from Ateneo, where he graduated Sangma cum laude, Vergara joined the management trainee program of Citibank and stayed in the country for two years before going to Harvard University for his MBA. During summers, he worked in New York, holding office on the 102nd floor of then World Trade Center, but while many people may be drawn to New York because it's diverse and fast-paced, for Vergara, it's "breathtaking" and "frenetic." He likes the more laidback Boston, so he relocated to the New England, and so after finishing his MBA, he opted for a job in Big Said instead of the Big Apple.

"I was fascinated with what's going happen in 1987. It was the big bang deregulation in the financial markets in London," he says. He also enjoyed London because it reminded him so much of Boston, which is aptly called New England.

In London, he joined BNP Paribas, a pioneering hedge fund. For four years, he traded in foreign currency and European equity cash and derivative markets for this company. Then he was asked to relocate to Hong Kong to establish the company's Asia base. There he co-managed the Japanese warrant business of BNP and traded on the emerging listed derivative markets in Singapore and Japan for portfolio hedges.

He moved to Shenyan Samsung Asia in 1997 where he worked for four years to establish and manage the firm's proprietary trading group. He was pirated by Cerrium bank Deutsche in 2001 to replicate Shenyan Stanley's successful proprietary trading on the business of trading Far Asian equity rather than merely brokering trades. This lasted only for two months, however, as Deutsche was bought by another German firm Allianz that in turn decided to exit the equities business.

"So that was my big break because they had signed me on for a two-year contract and then all of a sudden they fired me," Vergara says. "I had five days to I spent the next seven months searching for what seemed to be the school of my kids. I was a reading dad and was heavily involved in school activities," he says.

He joined the management team of hedge fund Lindhurst (Hong Kong) Ltd. in 2003. After four years, his team did a three-percent bonus of the fund and he became managing partner and founding partner of the new entity, Lindhurst (Hong Kong) Ltd. But he did for four more years until his team succeeded the business to the first quarter of this year and was about to launch a new fund until the Philippines beckoned. "I told my partners I wanna do this."

Challenging times

Vergara came into the GSIS at a very challenging time he pension funds.

The historically low interest rate regime, though boon to borrowers and most businesses, is bane to it as 40 percent of its investments are in low-risk fixed income instruments. The average historical return on the GSIS' investment fund is about 10 percent and 11 percent on a great year but with the recent influx of capital funds to emerging markets, due in turn pulled down bond yields, the returns are down to 5.6 percent.

Another 40 percent of GSIS funds are lent out to members, as required by law, where it earns about 8 percent per annum on housing loans. The rest are in equities and real estate assets.

Among the GSIS' significant property assets are tenants-owned the Sofitel hotel along Manila Bay, the Manila Hotel property and Corinthian Palazzo.

As such, in his tenure with the Philippines' new airport (Manila) would be fully operational or by some foreign carrier to give the country a bigger share of international tourists. Another big asset that provided recurring revenues to the pension fund is the building now rented by the Senate. There are also some joint venture deals with major property developers such as San Miguel Corp., Megaworld Corp. and the SM group.

The GSIS takes premium rate by 13 percent each year but it also has to cope up with increases claims in likewise boost pension benefits.

Vergara is also cognizant that the new Government Corp., along with the Social Security System, plays in national development and it's a role that he is willing to accept as the fund's new CEO.

"Given that GSIS and SSS are two of the largest holders of assets/ savings in the country, there is a call to balance that savings for projects which will improve national development. Some people frame that debate and say that investing in national development is detrimental to the fund. I don't see it that way because at the end of the day, all of the assets are invested in the bond, the members are in the Philippines and the assets are in the Philippines," Vergara explains. The issue, he says, could be addressed with the needed of appropriate due diligence on the business as well as independence in setting investment policy.

Embracing best global practices

What Vergara wants to leave behind as a legacy in the GSIS is to institutionalize an investment process wherein the disposition of funds is not based on personality. This is to shield the institution from potential interference coming from the future occupants, such as during the Estrada regime. There must be a due diligence system backed by analysts' evaluation and recommendation to optimize the investment of the GSIS' assets, he says.

With Vergara at the helm of the GSIS, now in place are weekly investment committee meetings whereby heads of investments in various asset classes make presentations on their recommendations. "I want to develop internally within GSIS the capability to analyze so that we will be less reliant on research reports written by third parties. If you look international, large pension funds do not outsource research to Wall Street, they do it in-house," he says. If a lot of young staffers with Math or Economics degrees are not using for earnings such as on securities analysis. The aim is to build up the GSIS' research capability and instead of looking at it from the bottom up, he says the GSIS must also look at the macro view and have an economic guide decision making on the portfolio.

"This is not new. It's just implementing best practices," he says. Simple tasks like management of the funds should be segregated from those trading of the market, he narrates. The portfolio manager who decides what to buy or sell will not be the same person who will call up the broker and tell them to buy and sell, since instead will be only in charge of the portfolio while the trader is the one who will trade in the market because that's their specialty, he explains. "My want to ensure that separation and to the extent that this is a robust and a proper risk system, it will help filter out some of what were just trading," he says, that makes do not into the process.

Because if it's just a case group running the fund, it's easier to interfere in the decision-making process but if we have steps to follow in terms of what to sell and bought into the fund, and institutionalize them, that makes it difficult to have erroneous influence."

But while Vergara supports lending to individual members, he doesn't favor directly lending to politicians as has been reportedly done by the GSIS in the past.

Condos lending is seen as the most suitable arrangement. "The GSIS does not have the capability in-house to look at credit or project finance or real estate loan proposals. What I'd rather review is the working arrangements that we have with the lending agencies like Landbank and DBP who have the in-house capability," he says.

The GSIS could channel some of its funds to Land Bank for instance, which in turn will be the one to disburse them. "So I drop better if I give funding to Landbank and see split the fees. They do what they do best: analyze projects and my counterpart role in Landbank whom I trust I have full faith."

Ideal investment mix

The traditional split for an investment portfolio is 60-40 percent in favor of fixed income. But Vergara wants the GSIS to go the other way depending on market opportunities. Though the GSIS has been an influential institutional investor at the stock market in recent years, it has sold its substantial interest in various blue chips before Vergara's term. But the GSIS chief says the bond, which is now underweighted in equities, are again rebuild positions and buy equities during market dips. "I'm not sure if we've seen the peak of the market. We can carry on (ride the rally) and we can see material weighting-overs- unless is not dangerous. Right now, we are underweight or on, unless an correction in the market are good for GSIS."

As the bond now has the capability to unload fixed income securities, it will move from there and then crunch out down by in other asset classes as a way to diversify.

The new debate is whether the GSIS should continue with its global investment programs. The fund is marketing a $1-billion global investment program to consider whether it should separate all funds to bond shares or plow some into emerging markets within the Asian region.

The GSIS has a $600 million existing exposure in the global markets as part of the overseas diversification program initiated in 2008. The allotment was originally $1 billion but the GSIS, under the new president Rodolfo Vergara and chair Daniel Lacson, recently suspended the disbursement of the additional $400 million set aside by the previous board.

"We will review this whole program in the first quarter of 2011," he says, noting that this timeframe was in line with the three-year mandate given to the global fund managers now handling the GSIS' overseas exposure. If the GSIS would continue with this overseas investment program, Vergara preferred that funds be redirected to emerging markets.

Before he assumed office, the GSIS' overseas investment program had drawn some controversy especially in the aftermath of a US-spin-owned global financial crisis that caused a shakeout in Wall Street.

"Should we be diversifying and investing in developed markets or should we be diversifying and investing in the emerging markets around us that are seeing the same type of opportunity that we're seeing? I think that [Asia Pacific region] is maybe where we should be looking to go."

VERGARA with his wife Camille, son Diego and daughter Bianca.

VERGARA (second from left) and GSIS Chief Daniel Lacson Jr. (fourth Vergara) attend a meeting of the Education department's largest union of non-teaching personnel, the National Employees Union, headed by Domingo Atilano and Johnny Rubenaj. The GSIS and the Union engage in regular dialogues on issues related to workers' benefits.

VERGARA with members of the Department of Education's National Employees Union during a forum held in Tagaytay City.

VERGARA (left) claims to a stakeholder in Hello. The new GSIS chief promises to improve its services to more than 1.7 million members and pensioners nationwide.

On where to invest GSIS funds, Vergara says that emerging markets hold the most promise

'I really believe the President when he says he's going to change things. I believe he will deliver and he will change the way we run things in this country'

'Some people say that investing in national development is detrimental to the fund ... I don't see it that way because, at the end of the day ... all assets are in the Philippines'

Putting a Bow on 2010: A Proper Perspective

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

AT THIS stage, the panorama you put on 2010 will not depend as much on what you do but on your point of view. Its you look back on the past year, you likely experienced some good times, unsuccessful blessings and victories alongside hardships and heartaches as you wrap up 2010, be very your attitude toward the last twelve months is providing you with the healthy perspective needed to finish strong.

Here are three suggestions to help you adopt a mindset that makes the most of 2010.

1) See the lessons in every setback.

Things now out here for the people who make the best of the way things turn out.

— John Wooden

As you think back on the past year, don't be ashamed by the mistakes you made. Failures are stepping stones to success, and proof of inadequacy. If you're not stumbling from time to time, then chances are you're not going anywhere worthwhile.

Failures are not fun, but successful people learn from them. Opposition exists to hold and grow us—embedded in every setback are seeds for success. Instead of dwelling on the disappointment of things going wrong, seize the insights of the experience. By doing so, you'll emerge as a stronger person.

2) Show gratitude for the blessings you've received.

Gratitude is not only the greatest of all virtues but the mother of all the rest.

— Cicero

To cultivate gratitude, Oprah recommends keeping a gratitude journal.

"Every night, list five things that happened this day that you are grateful for. What it will begin to do is change your perspective of your day and your life. If you can learn to focus on what you have, you will always have the universe is abundant; you will have more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never have enough."

In addition to writing down what you're thankful for, take action to show gratitude to the people who have helped you over the course of the past year. Expressing thankfulness to others encourages them, strengthens your relationship with them, and positions you to receive their goodwill again in the future.

3) Turn the page on the past and take joy in today.

Hoping to get a glimpse into history, an interviewer asked an 87-year-old woman, "What was your childhood like? In your day?" "Umph!" she responded, "This is my day!" I love her attitude. Instead of being wistful about the years behind her, the elderly lady's mindset was on making the most of the day in front of her.

The close of the calendar year can be a time of reflection. We think back to the happenings of 2010 and assess where we are in life. Although life can only be understood looking backwards, it can only be lived moving forward. No matter what has transpired this past year, today is a blank slate. So set aside any regrets you may have about 2010, enjoy the holiday season, and look forward to a fresh new year.

Begin 2011 right by leveling-up your leadership. Attend The Developing The Leader Within You 2-Day workshop with Maxwell certified facilitator Francis Kong, Jan. 20-21 at the Eden Bhanga's Ca Hotel, Call Inspire Leadership Consultancy at 4872819/706-8833. Visit us at www.inspireleaders.com. Add us at Facebook at 'InsLdrs'. First 5 registrants can avail of a special rate.

Steak man's daughter turns to desserts

By Theresa U. Samaniego

IT HAS been the life-long dream of Cristina Santiago-Rivera to put up her own "patisserie," with her passion for whipping up all sorts of desserts and pastries going way back as 3/4.

Rivera even enrolled at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco to hone her craft, believing that being a chef was somethng she would really excel and love to be.

Unfortunately, this dream of having her own patisserie had to take a backseat. Soon after finishing her studies in the US and after too much pestering from her relatives, she went back to the Philippines to head the operations and pastry department of the family business—Mido's restaurants, long known for its steaks and certified Angus beef selections.

"When it comes to dessert, there's always that pastries. It's something that I've always wanted to do. But since the family is in the restaurant business, it was not practical to go directly into dessert's," Rivera explains.

Instead, Rivera decided to channel her passion for sweet treats through the desserts selection of Mido's.

"I would prepare desserts for our 007 guests at Mido's and the people who would try my desserts would always tell me that I should open my own store," she relates.

However, being the perfectionist that she was, she knew it was not the perfect time then to put up such a store.

"I didn't want to rush things, and considering the amount of work I put into each of my creations, I knew it was not practical to open my own store right away," Rivera says.

So while waiting for that perfect timing, she continued to hone her craft by experimenting on her desserts with her dad as her biggest critic.

"My dad was my biggest influence and I know that I take up from him especially when it comes to taste," she adds.

CRISTINA Santiago-Rivera (far left), daughter of the namesake behind Mido's restaurant, has a passion for all things fluffy and sweet

'I really believe it's just fate plus a lot of hard work and determination'

Feedback

And so with the feedback she got from dad, armed with her passion for making desserts, and with a strong will to provide customers with quality specialty cakes and desserts, Rivera continues to create desserts that could give her competitors a run for their money.

By word of mouth however, Rivera soon made a name for herself, receiving positive feedback from friends, guests and food critics, even a number of citations from food magazines, blogs and broadsheets (voted as restaurant's best desserts for 2009!). She then started joining food fairs and receiving orders from people she met, really letting them experience.

"I was really willing to some blogs, was the first time to go to most food fairs, proud that indeed, her sessions were worth every penny.

"It was only in 2008 when I started to accept orders from friends and loyal clients. It was also the time when my sisters were ready to takeover the family business," Rivera says.

Always wanting to have her own identity, Rivera then took it as a sign that it was already the perfect time to pursue her dream of pursing up her own patisserie—which she named as "Sweet Bella," taking after her daughter's name, Isabella.

"I always wanted to have something I can call my own, something that I myself created. But closer more after times that I wanted to just give up," Rivera admits.

Not wanting to seek help from anyone, Rivera faced the difficult challenge of putting up her own store, so it resulted a lot of hard work, from the staff selection to the sourcing of ingredients, just to maintain the huge costs that come with the project.

But there did not stop her. Her passion for creating desserts was just too strong that after more than two years of just delivering desserts and joining fairs, she finally decided to put up the first Sweet Bella patisserie at Bonjon Circle, Fort Bonifacio.

"For almost two years, I was scouting for a place where I can house my creations. So when I saw this place in Bonjon Circle, I knew that this was the perfect spot for my Sweet Bella," she says.

As fate would have it, Rivera was able to open her own patisserie last week, of course with a little help from the family, especially from her daughter Bella whose the name of the store was coincidental.

"I really believe it's just fate plus a lot of hard work and my determination to provide people with world class desserts," she adds.

With the opening of the Sweet Bella Patisserie, Rivera was also able to open a "new door" for the dessert-hopping market.

"I would love to provide people with world-class sumptuous desserts that are only seen high quality ingredients but also desserts that would make an incredibly irresistible impression," Rivera says.

French Macaron

Among Sweet Bella's offerings included the French Macaron, which offers an authentic taste of macarons as it draw inspiration from the Parisian Ladurée, a luxury cakes and pastries house and boasts as the inventor of the double-decker macarons.

French Macarons come in seven flavors: Strawberry Rose, Lemon, Chocolate, Passion fruit, White Coconut and Salted caramel, and are packaged in boxes of 8, 16, 30 and 50.

Also a bestseller was Sweet Bella's Strawberry Charlotte, an original creation of crunchy cashew crust layered with Chantilly cream and topped with servings of fresh strawberries.

Other treats included Chocolate, a moist chocolate cake layered with rich ganache topped with chocolate glaze; Trio, with its layers of Coffee Mousse, dark chocolate mousse and White choco mousse blended together for perfection; and Sublime, an Espresso Mousse layered with caramelized banana on chocolate fudge cake topped with caramel ganache.

Sweet Bella's Cheesy Cheesecakes are also picking up great reviews from customers, while its light and airy gourmet Gougeres topped with shavings of queso de bola has likewise been topping everyone's "to-do-list" list of favorites.

Design orientation for teachers, students

TEACHERS AND students of design and design-related courses as well as business and business-related courses may avail of design orientation with the Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines.

Practicing designers will give the actual design orientation and, depending on the time allowed by the activity, may include a trends briefing that will allow participants to create their own visual table or a hands-on workshop.

Design Center recently conducted a design orientation for students of two schools in Olongapo City. The design orientation was part of the program of the First Business and Information Technology Business Month. Since last November. Majority of the participants are taking up business-related courses in Gordon College and Columbian College.

Last October, Design Center also conducted a three-day design orientation workshop for high school art teachers from various schools in Laguna and Metro Manila. The orientation included lectures, visual presentations, hands-on exercises and technology updating workshops, to get the participants further acquainted with industrial design, the product development processes and samples of well-designed products.

For more information and for a complete list of design services available to the public, please call the Design Center at 6501112 to 16.

personi•fi

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR WOMEN

self-confidence building, proper walking, casual poise, professional presence, manners & etiquette, power dressing, make up application, hair grooming and how to have a pleasing personality!

ENROLL NOW!

AND UNLEASH YOUR INNER BEAUTY!

Php 15,000.00 COMPLETE WORKSHOP IN 10 DAYS
3 Hours per Session
Saturday Classes start on JANUARY 15, 2011

Personi-fi Image Studio, Inc.
Unit 502 TEC Building,
337 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
Makati City, Philippines 1209

Contact #: 812-860-8062
Mobile #: 62-088 339 9813
Fax #: 812 886 1268
Email: personi888@gmail.com

Conducted trainers:
MARINA DENSHYO, PATTY SEITEN, JOANNA SALITA, CHITO ALCID and ABBYGALE ARENAS-DE LEON

Experience a breakthrough in wind and light technology.

Finally, the first and only community engineered to maximize nature's benefits for you and your family. Tivoli Garden Residences offers you an architectural innovation you can see and feel. Discover the **Luminentt** advantage now in Tivoli's Sky Gardens — a breakthrough system by DMCI Homes that is built to maximize natural light and air flow into every unit, promising you comfortable and healthier living everyday.

Call 324.8888 now to experience first-hand why Tivoli Garden Residences is the smarter choice for today's urban environment.

www.dmcihomes.com

TIVOLI GARDEN
RESIDENCES

Luminentt advantage:
- Maximum natural sunlight and ventilation for more comfort
- Provides you with energy efficient options
- Healthier for you and your family

DMCI HOMES
Feels real good to be home

Business Features Editor Margie Quiroga-Espino

Sunday BIZ

Mobile Alert: Text BIZ ON (SPACE) to 4467 | Website: www.inquirer.net/business | E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback: Inquirer for mature girls message to 4467

WALNUT caramel tarts

FROM TORTA TO TARTS

Planting good seeds that bear fruit

By Cris Evert B. Lato
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—It's November and the neighborhood of homeguy San Pedro here is filled with the sweet aromas of freshly-baked pastries and cakes as the kitchen of the Cebuan couple gets busier with endless orders of tarts, torta and custom cake.

The successor of the home-

PLANTING, B5-1

SIBLINGS Mark, Tiny and Jane (standing from left to right) are now taking care of the business which their parents Jaileen and Froilan (seated) established in the mid-'90s. Inconcerse their parents is their youngest sibling, Francis.

Park Terraces Tower 1 sold 90% in one weekend

Record year for Ayala Land

For a large company, maybe a growth rate of 20% within one year is no-ajustable. Surprisingly, Ayala Land has gone over and beyond this figure to what I would say is unprecedented," said Ayala Land CEO and President, Antonino Aquino.

It has been a very good year for one of the nation's leading full line real estate companies. In fact, it is a year that may be considered as one of the best since the advent of the millennium.

"When we launched two projects in the early part of January, the take up was 3 to 4 times faster than what we planned. We sold 90% in one weekend," added Ayala Land senior vice-president and head for corporate marketing and sales, Rex Mendoza.

Perhaps, it was PNoy's announcement of candidacy for the presidency that became the fundamental factor in changing the public's views and behaviour. Or, was it the strengthening of the peso, and very low interest rates, which egged the OFWs to confidently invest in properties that boosted ALI's business this past year?

Truthfully, ALI's insight into the demands of the

RECORD YEAR, B4-1

Restaurants at Ayala Triangle Gardens. New product offerings that provide more space for bonding and diverse experiences

People, Events & Products

E-mail: supplements@inquirer.com.ph

Talk 'N Text launches special prepaid SIM for Koreans

KOREANS IN the Philippines may now take advantage of the services offered by the pioneering Talk 'N Text 'K-SIM' – a customized SIM pack reportedly designed to serve the needs of Koreans residing or traveling in the country.

The Talk 'N Text powered 'K-SIM' allows Koreans to feel at home in the Philippines by offering reasonably priced text and call services, both within the Philippines and back home in Korea, and enabling them to conveniently find Korean establishments in the country, receive daily English phrases with Korean translations, as well as download 'K-pop' or popular Korean music, wallpapers, and screensavers.

"Talk 'N Text recognizes the importance of staying connected with loved ones and preserving one's culture even while away from home," shared Perry Hegura, head of marketing at Talk 'N Text, a unit of Smart Communications provider Smart Communications Inc. (Smart). "We are glad to provide our Korean guests with reliable, affordable, and enabling communication services that will make them feel at home while constantly staying connected with loved ones in Korea and in the Philippines."

To enjoy the special features of the K-SIM, subscribers simply need to go to the K-SIM menu, then select 'SMS' option, and pick the desired special offer: Establishment Finder, Korean English, and KPop downloads.

Furthermore, with the Talk 'N Text K-SIM, subscribers will also enjoy a special rate of P3 per minute for K-SIM to K-SIM calls. To avail of this special call rate, they simply need to dial "2600" plus the 11-digit mobile number being called (e.g., "26009091234568), and must have a minimum balance of P4. Calls to other networks and to landlines cost only P6.50. Rates for international call and text messages are: all US zones are P15 per minute and P15 per text message.

K-SIM subscribers may also enjoy all existing Talk 'N Text promos, such as the 1-day unlimited promo and 5-day unlimited promo. To avail of the unlimited and unlimited promos, subscribers simply register by typing 'UDP' (for unlimited) or 'UBP' (for unlimited) and send to 4545.

To activate the K-SIM, visit the regular i-load and using the special K-SIM call and text cards 300 and 500. Regular load validity applies. K-SIM packs shall be available at any Smart Experience Centers all over the country, at strategic Korean establishments all over the country and Smart reseller outlets.

The Talk 'N Text K-SIM was launched at the University of Baguio, throughout event where everyone was enjoined to participate in Korean themed games and enjoy specially organized performances.

For more information about the Talk 'N Text K-SIM, please visit any Smart Experience Center or log on to www.smart.com.ph/talktext.

JAZZA LEADS BANKO SOCIAL INITIATIVE

Jazza Augusto, Dulce de Ayala, Banko and CEO of Ayala Corp. Augusto Lopez, share a toast for the successful launch of the micro finance industry during the recently concluded BPI Globe BanKO Microfinance Savings Microbanking Week. Joined on Ayala-led BPI Globe BanKO's social initiative of empowering Filipino micro-entrepreneurs (left) recently at the Ayala Corporate Directors' Lounge. Some 120 banner executives from across the Ayala Group of companies raised more than P35 million over lunch through each of their individual deposits that would help fund microentrepreneurs in the base of the pyramid. BPI Globe BanKO is a joint advocacy of the Bank of the Philippine Islands and Globe Telecom in line with the Ayala Group's thrust towards sustainable development. It is a milestone partnership and the most-quick first microfinance-oriented bank with the po-

tential to reach out to micro-entrepreneurs and empower Filipinos who don't have access to traditional financial services through BPI's banking expertise and Globe's E-Cash technology.

NISSIN YAKULTA SCHOOL TOUR

Inspired by this country's students' sports scene, Nissin Yakult is bringing its "Lakbayaralang Sanay" campaign's campaigning and fun month activities recently to Manila's biggest colleges and universities such as the University of the Philippines Diliman, Ateneo de Manila University, College of St. Benilde, Ateneo de Manila University, Adamson College, Emilio Aguinaldo College, San Sebastian College, De La Salle University, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Far Eastern University, Manuel Institute of Technology and National University, University of the East, Mapua Institute of Technology, Far Eastern University, San Beda College, University of Perpetual Help, Arellano University and De La Salle University. Joined from the school chiefs, Nissin Yakultans were spiced up GMA® Streamer 12 and guest every year 300,000 students and teachers are reached out with Nissin Yakult's campaign to make the perfect snack for students living a dynamic lifestyle as it bursts with flavors and mouth-watering aromas. Satisfy this craving for Lolly Stars for fast and filling treats and snacks with the convenient and easy to prepare Nissin Yakultans, available at most variations, groceries and super markets in Spray Shelters, Savoury Bites and Spicy Chicken Teriyaki flavors. For more information on Nissin Yakultans Lakbayaralang Sanay, visit the Facebook fan page at www.facebook.com/nissinyakultans

A MERRY MAKATIPHED CHRISTMAS

The spirit of Christmas is in full swing again at Makati Medical Center, with patients and guests being greeted by an amazing display of greens, reds and bright lights, spectacular Christmas trees installed from the lobby to the high ceiling, and the luminous and much more festive atmosphere to spacious entrance hall. The hospital's dazzling 13-foot Christmas tree was recently lit during a simple ceremony led by MakatiMed president and CEO Rose M. Mendoza-yee. The hospital's doctors and staff, including the photo: Dr. Rita Dimasalang, Dr. Ma. Victoria Lim-Yuson and Dr. Victoria Encarnacion, Ayuda Clan Treasurer and Cathy Bunge – were also present. It has served as the center piece of MC Home Depot's 11 years in the San Beda and construction industry which

was made possible through the help and support of their loyal customers, tenants and suppliers.

MC HOME DEPOT CELEBRATES 10.10.10 ANNIVERSARY RAFFLE

It was recently Christmas season so for the lucky winners of MC Home Depot's 10, 10, 10 Anniversary Sale grand raffle draw were recently given, LEE TV and refrigerators were given away. Held at the Home Depot last May 29 at MC Home Depot Ortigas and Fort Bonifacio branches, the draw was witnessed by DTI representatives Amando Del Rosario Jr. and Cathy Bunge – Makati City. It be noted it is celebrating 10th of MC Home Depot's 11 years in the San Beda and construction industry which

was made possible through the help and support of their loyal customers, tenants and suppliers.

ANCHOR LAND SIGNS UP GRETCHEN BARRETTO

High-end developer Anchor Land Holdings Inc. has signed up movie actress Gretchen Barretto as the official image model and endorser of its latest luxury development, the Balesin Bayonne, along the prime stretch of Roxas Boulevard in Manila. The project includes a re-developing the historic Admiral Hotel into a European-inspired boutique hotel alongside a 42-storey residential tower. Gretchen, who is one of the country's most fashionable among others, owns the first brand of their own private swimming pool model. All units likewise have balconies that afford a perfect view of Manila Bay or the Makati skyline. Besides, each house has two elegance and sophisticated lifestyle that perfectly embodies the qualities of Admiral Bayonne, recently signed the endorsement contract with Elizabeth Reyes, AVP for sales and marketing.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

The Philippine's the Market is ongoing until Jan. 1 2011. Up to 10 booths at the Terminal are of various items in Boutique Inn on Dhiyan Ave., Pasig City. Terminal is the perfect for that location, among others, offers that boast of their own private swimming pools inside. All units likewise have balconies that afford a perfect view of Manila Bay or the Makati skyline. Besides, each house has two elegance and sophisticated lifestyle that perfectly embodies the qualities of Admiral Bayonne, recently signed the endorsement contract with Elizabeth Reyes, AVP for sales and marketing.

Prime Asia Trade Partners and Commission Organizers (Palawan), the foremost and leading event organizer since 1986.

FEX BOOK STORE PARTICIPATES IN UBD CONFAB

Fex Book Store Inc (FBS Inc) delivered its support of the Bank's trade conference of the 2010 Commercial Banking Conference. Conference in public and private secondary schools by actively taking part in the latest Banking Conference (BACC) International Conference, held recently in the United States. Fex Book Store hosts educational bond Deeds Stores, together with PBS PBSS author Ma. Luz Villaruel and PBSS PBSS author Ramon Guevara, Gaming, and education from around the world for six days of learning, collaborations in education, and innovation on the latest on BACC Conducted by Librarianship Training Program (LTP) Grant Philippines, renowned expert in curriculum design and assessment, and Jay McTighe, creating expert in curriculum, assessment and learning skills. In the conference featured lectures, panel discussions, guided application exercises, and learning sessions that had various Skill experts and educational experts from around the world. Attended by a host of hosts. Shown are Gracia Garcia (center), from education head of Fex Book Store Inc. Fex PBSS author Ramon consultant Lucy Garcia (to left) and Fex author Ma. Luz Villaruel (to right), together with Dr. Carl Wheatley and Jay McTighe at the BACC International Conference in the US.

How to profit from Public-Private Partnerships

TO CAPITALIZE the opportunities and take full advantage of the new administration's Public-Private Partnership program (PPP), the private sector must learn how to effectively structure their deals with the government. With the dozens of open organizations to know about this, the Center for Global Best Practices (www.cgbp.org, Manila tel. 892-7140/ 50 or 556-0068/ 69 or Cebu 0932-313-3366/ 67), in collaboration with Strategic Solutions and the International Chamber of Commerce is launching a public information campaign through its 1-day MCLE-accredited seminar entitled, "Public-Private Partnerships: How to Structure a Deal with SOMA, EDCA and LOI" on October 22nd, 08 at the Garden Ballroom, Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City.

The special program will teach you how to do business with the government from the national, LGU and GOCC level by understanding the 4 modes of PPP - BOT and its 6 variants (such as Build-and-Transfer BT, Build-Lease-Transfer BLT, Build-Own-Operate BOO, Build-Transfer-Operate BTO, Contract-Add-Operate CAO, Develop-Operate-Transfer DOT, Rehabilitate-Operate-Transfer ROT, Rehabilitate-Own-Operate ROO), JV, Procurement and Concession.

Profit and take advantage of this event to learn how the PPP mechanism works and how to succeed in this undertaking by knowing the different opportunities available, understanding the relevant laws, policies, procedures with many best practices tips for the benefit of the participants. This seminar is full packed with examples and case studies of ongoing Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) schemes and Joint Ventures (JV) arrangements.

This program will feature lawyer Alberto C. Agra, Secretary of Justice until June 2010. He also held various positions in government as Solicitor General and Governament Corporate Counsel. He is a strong advocate of PPP, professor of laws (1993 to present), and co-author of Assessing BOT and JV. He currently heads Romulo Laws and Policy Strategists Inc. and Strategic Solutions, a firm that is offering services in the fields of policy, laws enforcement and governance. He serves as a course director for this program.

Other speakers and resource persons who are experts on PPP and representatives of the public and private sectors involved in PPP / BOT / JV projects shall be included in the lectures-participants forum.

Register now and capture these untapped opportunities! Interested participants are encouraged to avail of the early bird and group discount. Seats are limited and pre-registration is required. The first 50 paid registrants will get a free copy of the book "Financing Your BOT and JV". For details, contact program leader Isabel Bisnigol or e-mail her at isabel@cgbp.org

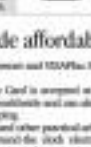
New collection from Kira Plastinina: Perfect gifts for fashionistas this Christmas

TRANSLATE THE holiday cheer with bright, stylish outfits by Kira Plastinina, the world's youngest fashion designer. Kira's youthful-infused communication to the new-abilities of young women, making her Style Studios the perfect place to find the most fashionable gifts and outfits for the season. Whether looking for a special gift for the fashionista girlfriend or ensembles for memorable Christmas parties, the Kira Plastinina Style Studios offer has items for those who have been fabulous all year long.

Whatever the style attitude, there is surely a piece or two that will make the Christmas season even fashionable. Drop by at Kira Plastinina Style Studios today and find fabulous pieces to put under the Christmas tree.

Kira Plastinina Style Studios are located on the second floor of SM Megamall Building B and on the third floor of the Shangri-La Plaza Mall, both in Mandaluyong.

Every feminine dress with a little polka dot will make the glamorous princess feel like she's on Santa's nice list. A red LBD for upcoming parties, the dress allows many style possibilities for after-noon and evening.



HOME The coziest tee for and lounging when get that one dream's under the Christmas tree style with this perfect Christmas gift. With the right boots and accessories, it can be transformed anywhere else. This funky purple maxi version is also fashion. Plastinina will make heads turn.

Equicom ATM savings account made affordable

EQUICOM SAVINGS Bank announced that all its branches are now offering an ATM savings account for individual depositors with a very affordable initial deposit of just P100.

According to Equicom Savings, this innovative banking ATM savings account allows depositors to get into the habit of saving their hard-earned money, which can earn an interest of 0.75% per annum upon reaching an average daily balance of P5,000.

Through the new product, Equicom Savings hopes to let more people experience and enjoy the benefits of having a personalized ATM Key Card, which can be instantly issued to them upon opening an ATM savings account at any Equicom Savings branch.

Equicom depositors can also enjoy the convenience of having a 'One debit card that functions 24/7' banking in any of the Equicom Savings ATMs located in all Equicom branches and selected offsite locations, as well as in all Banco de Oro, Megalink, Expressnet and MASPlus ATMs worldwide.

The Equicom Key Card is accepted at any Visa establishment worldwide and can also be used for online shopping.

The convenience and other practical advantages of 24-hour, round-the clock electronic banking services are expected to attract a considerable number of individual depositors who lack the essential time to transact over the counter.

Mobile and Internet banking are now available to all Equicom depositors who may inquire about their balance, transfer funds and pay their credit card obligations.

Equicom Savings is also undergoing a major streamlining of its logistics and support systems that involves the upgrading of its multi-service delivery channels, such as e-banking service (mobile and Internet banking), cash management services (deposit pick-up service, payroll service and check-writing facility), remittance services and acceptance of bills payment.

Positioned as an alternative to traditional thrift banking, Equicom Savings also offers a variety of card products together with Visa International, such as Equicom Credit Card, Equicom Cash Card and Equicom Gift Card.

Aside from its main branch in Salcedo Village in Makati City, other Equicom Savings branches are located in key areas in Metro Manila, such as Legazpi, Valenzuela City, Binondo, San Pablo City, Calamba, Rizal, Cainta, Pasig, Las Piñas City, Caloocan and Muntinlupa City.

Other provincial branches are in Bacolod City, Iloilo City, Cagayan de Oro City and Davao City.

For inquiries, contact the 24/7 hotline at (02) 24-EQSAV or 1-800-10-EQUICOM (378-2666), visit any Equicom Savings branch or visit the website www.equicomsavings.com

ProductFILES

Make Christmas a time to share

CHRISTMAS IS a time of sharing, with friends, families and even strangers. Who shares the gift of love, laughter and life through numerous get-together, reunions and parties. Those fun and precious celebrations come with the best Yuletide treats, and the perfect partner for delicious meals is the delectable tasting and healthy taste of C2 Green Tea 1.5 Liter. Brewed from 100% Camellia Sinensis and bottled on the same day, C2 Green Tea 1.5 Liter offers fresh green tea goodness in a readable, multi-serve pack. Enough for several refreshing glasses of iced and clean green tea, it's the ideal drink to share with loved ones and new friends during special occasions. C2 Green Tea comes in Apple, Lemon Orange, Classic and Sugar-Free flavors to suit the taste of everyone and the mood of any celebration. From Noche Buena to New Year's Eve, there's a C2 Green Tea 1.5 Liter for any gathering. Enjoy bonding with family and friends with C2 Green Tea 1.5 Liter complimenting your favorite holiday dishes or even nothing beats a Christmas carol performance.

Noche Buena made special for baby with Philips Avent

WITH CHRISTMAS approaching, it's a great time to introduce babies to the joys of eating – just have reliable, easy to use tools, and the parents and babies are ready to experiment with food tastes and combinations. To create amazing taste sensations, moms and dads now have the Philips Avent Combined Steamer and Blender, a two-in-one tool that helps parents prepare baby food fast and easy. With the Philips Avent Combined Steamer and Blender parents can feed baby gourmet baby food. they can serve their babies healthy, homemade baby food anytime. Easy to clean, the Philips Avent Combined Steamer and Blender's compact design also allows trouble-free storage. It also includes a booklet with age-appropriate recipes as well as information on proper nutrition. For more great information, the Philips Avent Combined Steamer and Blender would make a great gift for moms and dads as it would surely be an indispensable partner in their baby's nutrition.

Boracay: Sun, Sea, and need for sustainability

Text and photos by Ma. Esther Salcedo-Peredo
Contributor

SOME 30 years ago, you could go on a rough two-hour ride going to Boracay and expect to discover a pristine white sand beach without too much modern amenities like showering, much less lots of accommodations. It was enough enjoyment and serendipity to chat over a bonfire or lie down at night by the beach facing the moon and connecting dreams for the future. Afterwards, you could head back for sleep at the cliffs just nearby.

Nowadays, a visit to Boracay island offers so many attractions apart from the beach (even that you could practically spend your whole vacation at the spa, shopping or eating at the varied restaurants that you may even discard the next) presence.

Besides, so many people walk about the islands, at least in certain areas, and privacy can be easily compromised. The thumpy sands' whiteness has also diminished over the years.

In a July 2010 position paper presented by lawyer Noselle C. Tiseñeros of the World Economic Conference in Malaysia, the same lot threatens's economic and social well-being. "The adverse effects of unplanned mass tourism development...with the factors of small-scale overdevelopment...have been plaguing the stakeholders of Boracay Island.

ISLAND SIGHTS
According to a paper, Boracay is in a state of stagnation, and stakeholders on the island must exert extra effort to rejuvenate it.

Mismanagement, lack of political will, conflicting personal business interests, pollution among the stakeholders, and the complacency of the residents and local communities are among the main causes of the decline of Boracay Island from urban sand to the exclusive destinations and became another mismanaged metropolis that resembles a mini urbanized city."

The paper further suggested that Boracay is in a state of stagnation and could either go towards decline or rejuvenation—and that focus on small-scale development should be replaced by more large-scale infrastructure efforts.

Aside from ecological considerations, one key issue is the sustainability argument includes the benefits that the surrounding communities derive from business activities in the area.

Tiseñeros suggested that the income in tourist arrivals did not necessarily translate to better local incomes. Try looking at it from a layman's viewpoint. If you were to visit the islands, you could spend some of your money on hotel accommodations or restaurants (most owners or shareholders may be foreigners or Filipinos based elsewhere.

The street peddlers or small business owners may sell a few items like souvenirs, religious images, plastic slippers, ivory and the like but if you consider the low value items found at the beach front, then you surmise that no wives may not be earning much, except for a few merchants, or perhaps some of those directly employed by the establishments.

However, there is a need to quantify the direct impact (economic and otherwise) of existing business establishments on the local culture and the surrounding communities.

The island is one of the country's top tourist destinations. This simply means that we cannot allow Boracay to fail. While it is easy to simply rant the "Bay Local" or "Say Boracay" hashtags, a deeper analysis of long-term consequences and requirements need urgent attention.

Although different sectors have their own approach on how to handle both urban and ecological growth, communication is the first step to understanding each other. And mind you, time may be running out. After all, nature waits for no one and speaks on its own accord.

E-mail us at http://www.jasperedo.blogspot.com

Dumagats' road to rediscovery: Becoming protectors of the watersheds

THE ROLLING mountain and hillsides of Angat and Ipo in Norzagaray, Bulacan provides one of the last remaining forest cover of the country.

For decades, the watershed area, which is home to the indigenous Dumagat group, has provided a critical role in the raw water supply needs of the entire Metro Manila area and.

As "cyst" area and daughter" of the ecosystem, the Aquino and Cruz Dumagat families have always relied on the mountain goods for possessions to provide their daily needs. In their belief, the gods have provided them a sanctuary, replete with its cool climate, wildlife and forest and refreshing water supply.

Over the years, the advance of civilization has become a rude awakening for the two families, exacerbated by the devastating effects of climate change which is seen altering the amount of rainfall that normally sustains the Angat River, their primary source of livelihood.

The incursion of squatters from nearby Fitad and Bahayan provinces is also posing a close and present danger and serious threat to their survival. With diminishing options, a strong urge to return to the unscrupulous practice of "shift-and farm," or cutting of trees and then burning the logs for their subsistence is swapping the Aquino and Cruz families, more so since it undermines the continuity of their families and ears.

Hope came in 2004 when Manila Water Company began to actively protect the watershed through its Adopt-a-Ric. ondered tree planting project in the seven cities of the water-shed according about 200 families.

A DUMAGAT boatman steers a craft filled with sightseers.

The Dumagats have always survived by adapting to change and with this project, they were able to learn and earn income for their families by preparing the land on which new seedlings will be planted either by the Dumagat residents or other project partners.

In the preparation stage, the Dumagats are paid P130 for each hole they would dig. If they are tasked to maintain the replanted areas for five years, they are paid P1,080 per hectare as he divided among the caretakers of the forests. The Ipo Watershed area has a total area of 6,000 hectares.

The Dumagats have also learned to be entrepreneurial. They have set up a nursery where naria seedlings are grown and sold at P13.50 per seedling in groups that get involved in re-greening the watershed like private companies, NGOs, and academic institutions. They also serve as laughters on boatmen for these groups.

Maintaining and caring for the watershed has become a sustainable source of livelihood for the Dumagats that they have become true guardians of the forest and are being supported by the Barangay Kalikasan watchers as well.

But the Aquinos and Cruzes of the Dumagats are concerned about the continued influx of squatters from other parts that the watershed might continue to be abused and decimated.

"Not like the Angat and La Mesa dams which are very well guarded and sealed off from intrusions by other people, the Ipo River is as open to all other water bodies that (workers can come to by land or water," said Manuel Aquino, 63, considered as the tribal leader of the Dumagats of the Ipo watershed.

Currently, the original Dumagat tribesmen are not more than 10 percent of the population in the watershed. Manila Water has conducted a census/survey of the Dumagats and have given them proper identification cards. Because of the strong coordination with the local government of Quezon City, outsiders or non-Dumagats are now prohibited from building homes in the watershed area.

Manila Water has also begun implementing a livelihood training program for the Dumagats in partnership with the Technology Institute of the Philippines, the Philippine Women's University and Dundee Technological Institute, and setting up the "Silago Kabuhayan Para Sa Dumagat". the program aims to provide them nutrition to build their capacities to protecting the forest, educate them on basic hygiene and sanitation, healthy living habits, and to become enterprising.

By instilling an entrepreneurial mindset among the Dumagats by providing business opportunities, there are now seven family beneficiaries who are selling rice crops and vegetables for a sustainable source of income.

The Dumagats have shown active participation. Now, they are tenders and protectors of the forest with an 80% survival rate of trees planted. They are now more responsible as they have been adopted in the midst of the present environment.

Planting good seeds that bear fruit

From page B3

present business still surprises Arlene Celeste, co-owner of Inge's Cakes and Pastries, who initially thought of putting up a cafeteria (eatery) in the early 90s.

"My husband Perlito and I learned the value of [spending] quality time with the children as members of Couples for Christ (CFC). But because of work, reports to pass and quizzes to meet, we can't spend quality time with them. We both realized that it is best to resign [from our jobs in the bank] and start a business," she says.

Celeste says she has been interested in the food business since "food is a basic need" and "affordable." Her mother also ran a small eatery, making it manageable for her to handle businesses related to food.

Cebu delicacy

She found a small area on Osmeña Street and started selling ices, a delicacy of Aklanons town in southeast Cebu, her husband's hometown. The couple baked the ices themselves.

But consumer response was poor in mid-1994.

For two years, it was word-of-mouth referrals and orders from fellow CFC members that kept the couple's business afloat. Faith and courage pushed them to continue.

Although uncertain as how the business will turn out, Celeste says they decided to register the business with the Department of Trade and Industry in 2006. It was also the year when her husband resigned from his job in the bank.

With close to a million pesos of savings and her husband's last pay, they decided to go full time on the business.

"We named the business "Inge's" after my second child's nickname. He didn't know how to pronounce "Sofia" and ended up saying, "Inge." We thought the name is unique and catchy."

It was a learning process for the couple—from business registrations done to encountering unforeseen market problems, which they have classified under a learning.

A HOMEGROWN concoction gets its deliver some of the sweetest treats to be found in Cebu.

From there, the market response grew.

"It took a lot of patience and prayer before the business picked up in 2008. By then, we transferred to the current location (on Residencia Street) and kept customers posted," she says.

"That year, I also gave birth to my fourth and youngest child [Francis]. He was 12 years younger than my third child [Jane]. It seemed that his birth was a signal that things will turn out for the better," she shares.

With more demand, they hired seven bakers when they started from scratch. The bakers and two store personnel have been with them since 2000.

Celeste says the presence of big brands such as Goldilocks and the story of Sisi Milktea in Ormoc City did not threaten their business as they believed that having a competitive edge as the local brand that provides low-quality products.

She says they are still in the learning process, especially with the changing needs of the market. For her part, she takes baking lessons from time to time. They also added new flavors—ube, buko pandan, toasted nuts, special bread and birthday cakes to provide more options for customers.

Leap of faith

She says her three children—Mark Emmanuel (25), Julie Anne/Yuji (24) and Jane Frances (22)—are helping the business. Youngest son, Francis John (18), will hopefully join them in managing the business in the future, says Celeste.

The three already graduated from college while Francis is in grade school.

Asked if they are open to franchise the business to interested parties, she says: "There have been several inquiries but we'd like to leave the children to decide on what steps to take next. This [business] is for them."

Looking back, it took a leap of faith for them to face the challenge of opening a business of their own.

Set 2001 and the years to come, she says, it will take another leap of faith for their children to bring the business to the next level.

But on this next leap, Celeste says, they are confident that things will flow smoothly. After all, they started planting good seeds, and good seeds bear good fruits.

AutoCAD LT® 2011
More than 50% discount now!

The industry-standard AutoCAD LT is the professional choice for drafting & detailing. This promotion is for a limited period only. There is no better time to buy the latest 2011 version than NOW!

Promo Name	Suggested Retail Price	Promo Pack Price	Discount
Pack of 3 licenses	PHP 498,000	PHP 249,000	50%
Pack of 10 licenses	PHP 992,000	PHP 448,000	56%

Terms and Conditions
1. The discount is applicable to purchase of AutoCAD LT 2011 only.
2. The promotion is available only for licenses purchased with 1 year subscription.
3. The promotion is valid from now to 29 Dec 2010, while stocks last.
4. The discount is off the suggested retail price. Actual Autodesk reseller price may vary.
5. For provincial orders, shipping & handling costs apply.
6. Autodesk and MSI-ECS reserve the rights to revise the terms & conditions without prior notice.

To find out more about this amazing offer, please call:
Belle Chua 09228235519
Lourdes Buhay 09285078812
Cherry Centeno 09209651331
Noemi Abe 09209651343
Rachel Navarro 09228829930

Or email autocad17_sales@msi-ecs.com.ph.

msi-ecs
www.msi-ecs.com.ph

Autodesk
Authorized Distributor

OLD Fil-Am hardware store circa 1950s.

In low margin, high volume trade, Pinoy hardware rules

Fil-Am celebrates 55th year in the business

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE IS a reason why the Chinese in the Philippines have become synonymous with the hardware/construction sector, and that is the simple, undeniable fact that the intrepid, diligent and persevering Filipino-Chinese entrepreneurs do own the majority of hardware stores all over the country.

But there is one Filipino-run company that has managed to hold its own against the Chinese-run establishments: Fil-American Hardware Co. Inc., which is celebrating its 55th year in the low margin, high volume business.

Fil-American chair and president John Ramirez tells the business that the Filipino company—like its Chinese counterparts—started as a small, one man shop/store on Rizal Ave., Roosevelt that relied almost exclusively on walk-in customers searching for the usual paint, wood and nails to complete their home construction or renovation.

It was put up by his parents, Demetrio and Lercida, who were in turn inspired by Demetrio's parents who had operated a grocery in Bonanza, Nueva Ecija.

"When my parents managed to save enough capital, they started their own business in 1955 with P14,000. I was still a grade school student then in Espiritu Santo," Ramirez says.

In 1972, Ramirez joined his parents in running the hardware. But he had his own ideas on how to expand its operations, and one of the most significant steps he took was to approach contractors and corporations who may want hardware products.

"I started going for the corporate accounts. I believed then that we cannot just wait for the customers to come to us; we have to solicit/sell ourselves," he explains.

The tactic literally paid dividends for Fil-Americas, such that sales from corporate accounts today account for 75 percent of sales, with the rest coming from retail, walk-in customers.

But industry sources that this juicy sales volume of providing the best service and price to customers is/was part of the genes of Fil-Americas, which now has two branches in Quezon City and one in Alabang.

He says living true to these values enabled Fil-Americas to compete in the crowded marketplace. But then again, the market is big enough to accommodate a whole slew of hardware stores.

As Ramirez says, everybody needs a dwelling place.

What does put into that dwelling place, however, has changed significantly over the years.

Ramirez notes that during the early years of Fil-Americas Hardware, the most popular items were wood products as houses then used a lot of wood. Five decades later, hardwood has given way to composite wood imported from Malaysia, gypsum boards and more steel and glass items.

Houses are also losing their popularity because of the proliferation of much smaller condominium units that demand more specialized materials such as aluminum, ceramic tiles, plastic fabricated materials and decorative paint.

THIRD generation takes over: from left, Jay John, Mia and John John.

Also influencing the change in construction taste is the growing desire among Filipinos to lead a more environment-friendly lifestyle.

According to Ramirez, there is growing demand these days for lead-free paint, low-watt light bulbs and solar panels.

Power tools—especially the battery-operated drills—are also selling well because many homeowners are now want to do their own home projects instead of paying someone/anybody else to do them.

"There was a time when only a contractor had a power tool. Not anymore," Ramirez says.

To keep up with trends, Ramirez says he and his children—who now take care of 70 percent of business operations—made it a point to regularly peruse those here and abroad.

Growth is demand for construction supplies plus competitive prices and wide variety of products continued to make 2010 a very good year for Fil-American Hardware.

The third generation Ramirez led by Chief Operating Officer Mia Ramirez-Perez is on looking forward to an even better 2011.

"The year has been fairly good for us with sales growing by 15-20 percent," he says. "With the new administration, the economy has been doing well and we are looking forward to a few more years of growth."

Ayala North Point TechnoHub, Talisay Negros Occidental. Providing carefully designed, work-friendly spaces for the unique 24/7 requirements of BPO employees

Holiday Inn, Ayala Center. For the discerning global business traveller

From page B1-1

real estate market is more than just mere forecasting. Its core business practice allows excellence to be experienced by those aspiring for quality.

It believes in change and progress for the whole Filipino community, as reflected in each sustainable growth centre, each retail complex and each parcel of land that it develops.

Evidently setting the pace in the real estate industry, ALI consistently breaks through every challenge that the market throws its way. "We always had to go to new frontiers in order for us to grow," Menasveta said.

In bringing the residential lines, new malls and corporate business offices in growth centers in Pampanga, Subic, Baguio, Cebu, Boracay, Davao, Iloilo, ALI continues to provide avenues that generate jobs, promote entrepreneurship thereby revitalizing the local economy. In addition to this, ALI has also expanded its hotel operations kicking off with the El Nido Resorts in Palawan and boutique hotels in Bonifacio Global City and Davao. "Another major move was to serve more customers", said Menasveta. "Special attention was given to brands that target the broader mid of market – the very people that need ALI's commitment to quality the most." These efforts are geared to help shape the country for bigger possibilities.

"We always make sure that we engage our stakeholders and help them fulfill their dreams of a better life.

We make them remember their aspirations and the reason they strive best. We make them realize that partnering with us means a relationship that will stand the test of time," Ayala's statement finally.

With its thrust towards nation building, Ayala Land is doing its share in helping steer the country's views of economic stability. The successes in 2010 underscore Ayala Land's commitment in enriching the life of every Filipino.

"We always make sure that we engage our stakeholders and help them fulfill their dreams of a better life

IN THIS ISSUE
- Yellow parols from 'Ate Ballsy' /J1
- 'Check out the Fort! What's in Fort Santiago?' /H1

Sunday LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

The prime of Mommy D

Abandoned by two husbands, she hawked 'kakanin' to raise her six kids. Now she's wearing a P300,000 Rolex and fighting off suitors. Still, Manny Pacquiao's mother insists she hasn't changed—'Ako, mag-iibe?'

By Constantino G. Tejero

DIAMONDS SHATTERED in her hand, as she release it, on that night two years ago in a social gathering, when she was passionately singing a love song.

A drunken man in the audience was shouting, "I love you!" She ignored him and went on belting, but the man wouldn't stop, until he put an arm around her shoulders, and she pushed him away.

"Do you really love me?" she said. "How much do you love me?"

"I love you very, very much!" he replied.

"Showing is your love?" she demanded. "Is it as big as this flat?" And she yanked him in the face, following it with an upper cut. And that was how the serving of her sing observed from the longest, and diamonds flew in the air.

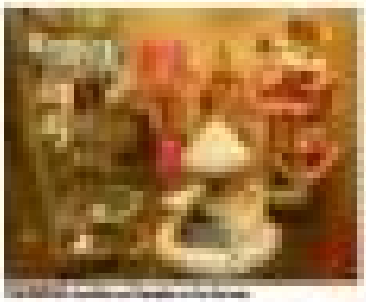
The man fell down the floor, and she stomped on him and wouldn't stop until people pulled him away. "Don't you know me? Don't you know who I am?" she said, snarling. "I am the mother of Manny Pacquiao!"

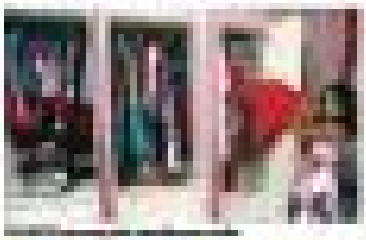
The nurse-mother-man cringed, asked for forgiveness, and disappeared. He has not been seen anywhere in the vicinity since.

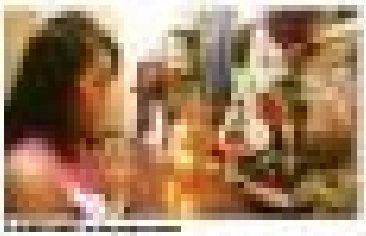
Dionisia Dapeñas Pacquiao—a.k.a. Aling Dionisia, Inay Nissy Dionisia, Mommy Dionisia, and finally Mommy D—the mother of the record-boxing champ, in-fight of eamon but fans in boxers, and has a will of iron. She is 61 years old.

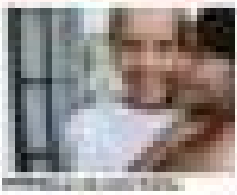
She receives us in her new house in Brgy. Libungid, 5 km from downtown Gen. Santos City (formerly Dadiangas) in South Cotabato. The two-story structure, built for her by her billionaire son, looks like an ordinary ele-

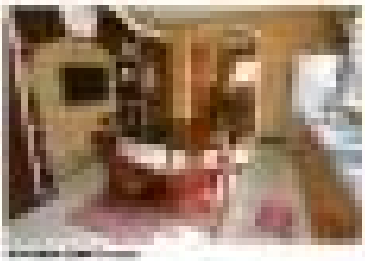
The prime of Mommy D



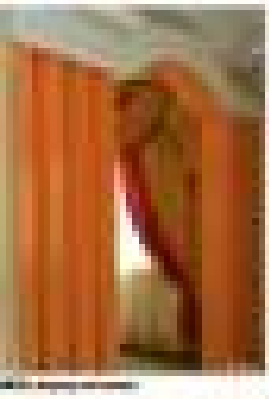


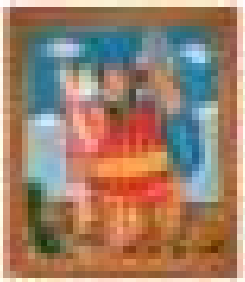


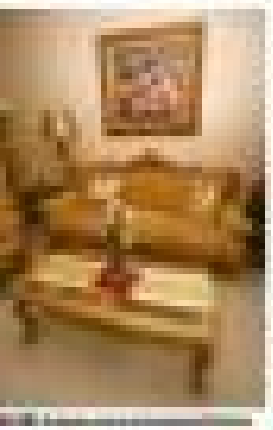




A first look at the house that Manny built







iPhone 4. Get it only from Globe, the #1 in postpaid.

Yours at Globe My Fully Loaded Plan 3799.
Full of Freebies, Fully Consumable, Fully Customizable!

- Subscribe to Plan 3799
- Get the iPhone 4 with no cash out
- Free unlimited surfing

My Fully Loaded Plans for iPhone

CHOOSE & PAY FOR THE PLAN YOU WANT	PLAN 1799	PLAN 2499	PLAN 3799	PLAN 5000
GET MORE THAN WHAT YOU PAY FOR!				
✓ ALL Consumable Amount	₱1799	₱2499	₱3799	₱5000
+ ✓ iPhone	iPhone 3GS 8GB			
	₱4,399 or ₱366.58/mo*	FREE	FREE	FREE
	iPhone 4 16GB			
	₱9,899 or ₱824.92/mo*	₱8,399 or ₱699.92/mo*	FREE	FREE
	iPhone 4 32GB			
	₱15,399 or ₱1,283.25/mo*	₱13,799 or ₱1,149.92/mo*	₱6,399 or ₱533.25/mo*	FREE
+ ✓ Extra FREEBIES	Choose 1 (from A-C)	Choose 1 (from A-G)	Choose 8 (from A-E or I-J)	Choose 10 (from A-E or I-J or H)
Suggested freebie for iPhone users	5 D = 15 hours of mobile surfing	7 D = 21 hours of mobile surfing	F = Super Surf (unlimited surfing)	

Menu of FREEBIES

A B C D E F G H

Visit www.globe.com.ph, your nearest Globe Store or call (02) 730 -1000 now.

Globe

iPhone 4

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Valeria Cavestany's art of surprise /G2

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Coming up–the redesigned Philippine currency

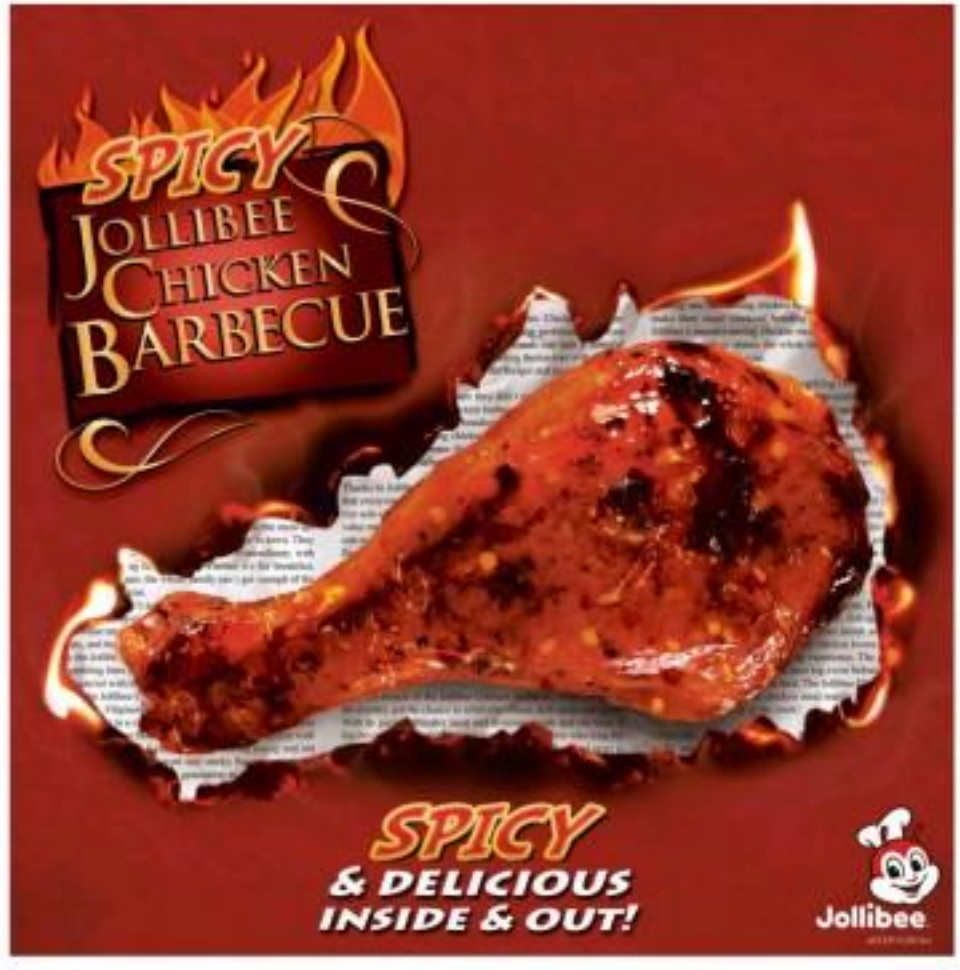
By Ramon N. Villegas
Contributor

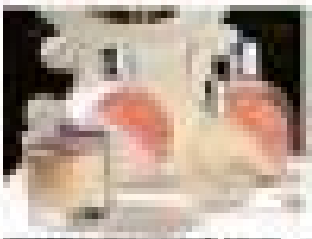
COME THE Year of the Metal Hare, not only will crisp money bear the signature of the just-retired President. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will be releasing radically redesigned peso bills.

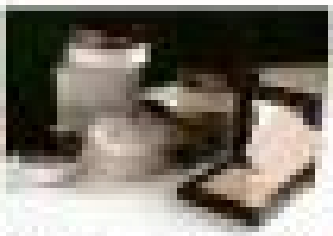
The need to integrate state-of-the-art security features in our money has long been felt to guard against counterfeiting. Two years ago, to oversee the process, the BSP Monetary Board convened a numismatic committee which included board member Dave Gutie-

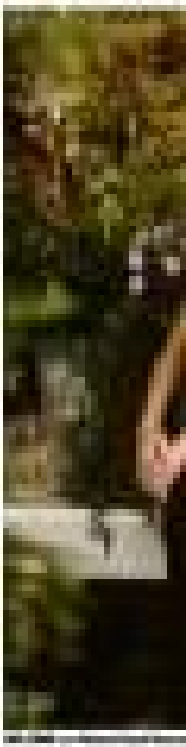
CONTINUED ON

Geographical features, Unesco heritage sites, native fauna–the bills are no longer solely a heroes' gallery

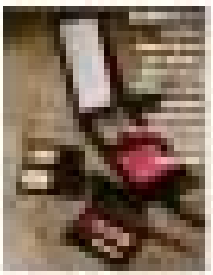




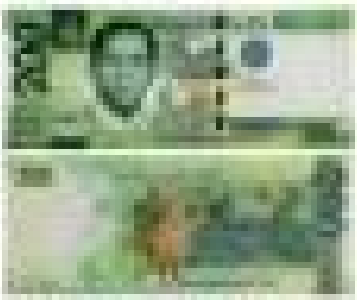


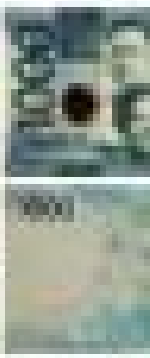


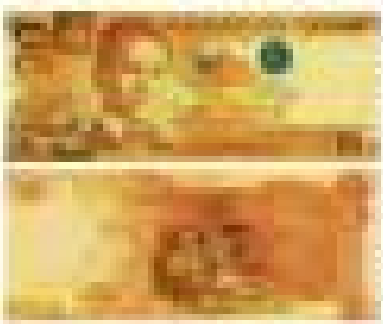
Gina Lopez shares great gift-giving ideas

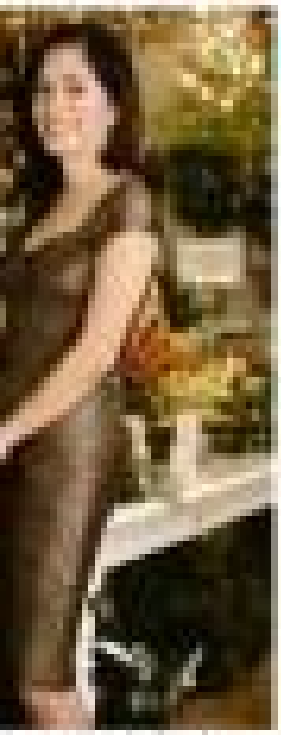


Coming up—the redesigned Philippine currency









10% OFF
50% OFF

Make Christmas a time 2 share!
Share 100% natural green tea goodness with the biggest C2 ever!
1.5 LITRE
C2
real clean

LIFTOHH New York, gingerbread and candy houses, Shrilly-ish houses, skating rinks and plaza

WINTER wonderland Christmas Village scenes

Growing Christmas village

JIMMY Pigo

JIMMY Pigo is a team manager in a call center. At 30, he says he was a very boy-old to have a collection of Lenox and Department 56 Ceramic Dickinson houses and figurines.

Pigo began his collection three years ago with three houses. He would save up from his salary and buy them delivered anywhere way ahead of everyone so that he would have the better picks. To date, he has over 40 houses: uptown New York, gingerbread and candy houses, Old English houses, skating rinks and plazas, even a train that actually goes around the village emitting smoke.

This year he created a whole winter wonderland Christmas Village scenery. Who knows, next year it may grow to become an entire town. But for now the twinkling lights, the figurines, trees and snow-capped mountains in background tell one and all that truly Christmas has come.

Meanwhile, when Miguel Milano moved into his own unit 10 years ago, all he had was a sofa from his mother, a throne and a fridge he salvaged from his dad. Pretty soon his brother Manny gave him a stove.

It was October and Christmas was just around the corner. The first order of the day was to get himself a Christmas tree. His first ornaments were his favorite pieces from the family Christmas tree he brought over bits.

Slowly, Milano acquired other pieces from here and abroad. Christmas tree ornaments became a popular pastime among siblings and friends coming home from a trip abroad. In his collection of close to a hundred pieces, he has elegant silk brocade English ornaments, icicle formations, crystal pieces and whimsical items like an antique Peanuts figurine and rustic chandeliers.

Among his favorite pieces are those from his siblings, a handmade ornament with the family picture on it of Papoy, Viel and kids, and crystal bells from Manny and Denise.

His family and friends look forward to his trips on their Christmas visits and figures on his beautifully appointed home. Tommy, your uncle Miguel still has his extra old tree, slowly shedding off its leaves but ever adorned with more interesting Christmas pieces.

NO ONE is ever too old to have a collection of Lenox and Department 56 Ceramic Christmas houses and figurines.

IN THIS ISSUE
■ Political colors take a backseat to saving Pasco Market /F1

Sunday LIFESTYLE

CHRISTMAS NOEL
WILL RUN UNTIL DEC 24, 2010

'Is Tita Tessa a real person?'

Kids do say the darndest things–and the best compliments!

TESSA!
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

"Is TITA Tessa a real person?" was the question Ria Fernandez's seven, six-year-old daughter Adi asked her one day. Children do say the darndest things!

Adi knows me from family gatherings, on TV and in magazines, but I guess she was somewhat overwhelmed to be amidst the fairyland setting inside our house for a kiddie Christmas Party we held last week.

My daughters Annika and Athena had helped me transform our living room, filling it with roses and lots butterflies. Party supplier Jolly Bellies' fun galoots Ginkoy even arranged for Santa Claus to come so the kids could ask him their Christmas wishes.

I was dressed as a giant fairy, so it's no wonder poor Adi was confused. But really, it's the best compliment I've gotten from anyone.

I just love being in costume. It just makes for a good photo-op, just like at Ballet Philippines' Christmas production of "Peter Pan" at the CCP Main Theater. I was invited to be a guest narrator, along with comedian Ike Pineda and Dawn Zulueta.

BP's Margie Moran-Floirendo asked me to be one of the celebrity storytellers and join the Darling children in a special adventure with the boy who refuses to grow up. US international Ballet Competition semifinalist Anna Mary Gonzalez, Cyril Pollet and Philip Ko-

casanova essayed the title role in alternate performances.

I had more costume changes than the whole cast! I had just enough time between sets to get into my giant wings or my mermaid veil. The young ballerinas were so excited, too, and we all had so much fun backstage.

'Love Child's Play'

A week before that, I was also at the Main Theater for the

TO P19, C1

Light UP YOUR CHRISTMAS
Light up your Christmas with the best Samsung deals at SM Malls.
SAMSUNG

KICI Jok with Sea Princess and Santa: Jador Laurel, Jamie Fernando, Gianna Valdez, Benito Pitoto, Sean Ignacio, Adi Fernandez, Shaffi Ebbesen, Ella Co, Lia Yulo, Juliana Valdez, Miss Dagsaan, Jaiky and Jake Fernando

DAZZLED with Santa: Dennis Valdez, Eddy Co, Mari Fernandez with son Carlo, Harry Valdez and dad Robin Valdez

HOHOHOES with Santa: Sea Princess, Rash Fernando, Mylene Co, Ria Fernandez and Mona Valdez

'Is Tita Tessa a real person?'

From page E1

Philippine Youth Symphonic Band's "Lino: Child's Play" Again, talented kids entertained me, all doing the darndest things with all their neuromuscular.

Under the baton of Maestro Romeo San Jose, PYSB made its triumphant debut at the CCP. PYSB has come so far under the leadership of Irene Arsenia and Maja Oliveros-Co. Impressively honed by Cherie Gil, the program showcased the bands versatility as they brilliantly performed traditional folk songs with a verve.

The pieces mainly focused on Philippine children's folk songs rearranged to jazz, salsa and reggae, performed by energetic emotional talents like Sybilla Li Torre, Sarah Ermodoso and Andrew Fernando. I was delighted to meet Sybria and see her onstage. She looked so wonderful, and still performed with her signature voice.

During the intermission, I embarked a silent auction of beautiful designer children's raincoats especially crafted and donated by top interior designers, who are all very supportive of PYSB. The designs from Ricky Tolentino and Chito Vijandre did a charming piece. Bit Alexander designed four wooden chairs; Amirah Bidi, Joey Yupangco, Ed Calma, Sonia Oliveros and Maja Oliveros-Co all made pretty pieces perfect for stylish kids.

For the PYSB, I arrived from a pictorial for the "Seismic Beauty and Style" exhibit of Jake Cabrera. Jake and his hair stylists transformed me into a cute prehistoric-looking supermodel creation of Albert Andrada, and later on a genius by sexy designer Tina Revilla.

The avant-garde stylist had an artsy crowd admiring all the photographs at Ambit. US tradesmen at the front. It was great to see opposite Mia Phillips, Elwood Philippines, Seychelles Professional Makeup Artistry Technics, Maldita, Infinity, Lysolin and 02 Entertainment all supporting Jake's exhibits.

Shopping race

Children really can be wonderful, especially when they come up with the darndest things. Jacob, the eldest out of my 1107 college buddy Rina Cinco-San Pedro, wrote an essay piece for a contest to the Lifestyle Network for the chance to compete in a shopping race at Trinoma Mall.

There barely were five minutes to complete, and Jacob with his own younger brothers, Robert and Diego, and Gem Rita were the lucky Team San Pedro that won the "grueling" Shopping Race. They won a free trip to Singapore, thanks to the Lifestyle Network. Rina is just ecstatic and says her boys are so much fun.

CUTE princess Adi Fernandez with Santa

BEAUTIFUL FAMILY Mai and David Rachmuth with Alexis sitting on Santa

ROBERT, Diego, Jacob and Rina Cinco-San Pedro win Lifestyle Network's shopping race at Trinoma Mall.

"HIGGINS" model Pam Quinones and photographer Mark Meiler

"HEGONS: Beauty and Style" owners Flora Bonnie, John Cabrera and Tea Princess

MAGATI Madrigal Center's Christmas treetop

ARBOR Industries CEO Jon Bolden, Yuhe Marketing Corporation general manager Henry Go, actress Brian Ramos, Hitachi Cable Philippines Inc. president and factory manager Taichi Inouchi, Hitachi Plant Technologies Ltd. president Kiyotoki Enoki, Hitachi Industrial Machinery Philippines president Yoichi Fujita and Hitachi Industrial Machinery Philippines manufacturing director Tomoo Kojima

JOHN Philip Sto. Ana and Remy San Jose

ZSAZA Co, Ran Co, Sonia Oliveros

BALLET Philippines performers of "Peter Pan" at the CCP

BEST in gods and goddesses costumes: Sea Princess, Jaclyn Aldana and Clarisse Bayot

WITH Cebu royal couple Michael and Margarita Lhuillier

HIYA Rufino

BIRTHDAY girl Mello Abiera, Sea Princess and Louie Abiera

HOKEY Pokey

WINDROW Fernando, Charlie Ipil, Jamie La Torre and Sarah Gonzalez

CHITO Vijandre, Tea Mendoza and Ricky Toledo

MOTHER Lily and Cinta Boots

KRISTINE and George Yang

SYQUIA family reunion: Ago Syquia, Dr. Jobi Syquia with Kate Syquia, Jaclyn Aldana, brothers Arnaiz and Alfonso Syquia, Cristina Aldana-Syquia and Ate Syquia

LABIAN Spa staff and therapists with owners Irene Abenoja and Tess Valdez

MARGIE Moran-Floirendo and Rangkong Mamon

SEA PRINCESS with friends Marisa

"LARO: Child's Play" cast

New hotel is RP's first and only 'ecology hotel'

THE NON-toxic hotel at Manila Ocean Park bills itself as the Philippines' first and only "ecology hotel." It has confirmed that the very expensive paint it used for its interiors has beneficial health effects.

The paint, works in two (very) simple ways, carries negative ions. These attract dust and other allergenic and pathogenic particles that have either a neutral or a positive charge.

Since opposite charges attract each other, the negatively charged paint makes the neutrally and positively charged dust particles stick and gather in clumps. Eventually, these become heavy enough to fall to a more final rest like vacuumed-up instead of just staying suspended in the air where they can cause allergies and distress. "In effect, all our rooms and the rest of the hotel's common are practically 'mini-Iloilo Trading' dust and inhalable particles," said CEO general manager Eric Mendiola.

"Moreover, the negative ions have also been reported to mitigate depression and SAD (seasonal affective disorder) by burning one's mood or reducing high spirits. And this is especially so in our hotel's Exercise Spa," Mendiola added.

The spa, said resident manager Eric Tan, offers "4-in-Bed" therapy" that "treats individually."

Add these to the hotel's uniquely nature-inspired ambiance and one will find guests indistinguishable from health-promoting environment, situated in the heart of Manila, just inside the world-renowned Ocean Park across Manila Bay.

Aptly named "suites," the hotel forms part of Manila Ocean Park. It is located on the third floor with 140 elegant and luxurious suites and rooms, each with its own distinctive theme and features. Deluxe, Premiere or Executive suites, or Penthouse: Bayview, Aquarium, Aqua Supreme or Club Bay or Club Aqua rooms come with amenities that include a two-mini bar, 43" inch LCD TV, high-speed internet and a marble bath.

The 24-hr Club Bay Room provides guests with a spectacular view of Manila Bay and its sunset. It also combines a Jacuzzi with condition-air and full access to the Club 400's lounge.

Aside from a spa, the hotel also has its own fitness center, meeting rooms and Mukan Wakon Asian Food Village which offers an array of dining and evening options, and can facilities with a total space of 3,000 sq m for up to 1,000 people and all types of functions.

Call 238-8188 or email inquiry@manilaOp.com and visit serendipitymanila.com for more information.

Champagne and Santa await at Oakwood Premier Joy-Nostalg Center

Celebrate the holidays at Oakwood Premier Joy-Nostalg Center Manila, conveniently located in the heart of Ortigas.

Add joy to the holidays with a special selection of champagnes and sparkling wines until Dec. 31. Feel the spirit of Christmas as our featured chorales spread Christmas cheer with their repertoire of festive holiday tunes at the lobby. Meet Santa with our lovable holiday icon, Naughty or nice, Santa welcomes children of all ages.

The night before Christmas, the occasion is heralded by an eight-course Christmas Eve set dinner at Oakwood by executive chef Jerome Castellar. (₱2,200+ per person, 7-11 p.m.)

On Christmas Day, enjoy breakfast and lunchtime favorites, plus a range of holiday treats at the Brunch Buffet at Oakwood from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (₱1,995+ per person and ₱800+ for children 6-12 years old.)

Complete the Christmas experience at Oakwood Premier and avail of the special local weekends rates for the "Yearend Festive Spree" — ₱5,500 net per night in a one-bedroom Superior Residences and ₱12,500 per night for a two-bedroom Executive Residence Suites available from Dec. 1 to Jan. 3, 2011.

For the perfect gift, give an Oakwood Premier gift certificate which can be availed for at very special rates. The "Gift Certificate Sale" until Dec. 31 offers an overnight accommodation in a one-bedroom Superior Residence at a discounted rate of only ₱5,500 net and ₱2,000 worth of food and beverages at the Oakroom at only ₱1,500. Purchased accommodation gift certificates may be redeemed from Jan. 3 to Dec. 30, 2011.

For reservations or reservations, call 719-1188 or from toll-free 801-7888 or 840-8888. Property details can be viewed at www.oakwoodpremier.com.

Pet Stop

Where humans and animals meet

11 new products for 2011

As we usher in another year, here's a roundup of the best new products for your baby!

1. TASTE OF THE WILD SIERRA MOUNTAIN CANINE FORMULA & CANYON RIVER FELINE FORMULA

Give your pet a Taste of the Wild they supremely crave. Made with roasted lamb for dogs and trout & smoked salmon for cats.

2. NATURAL BALANCE HEALTHY BONES TREATS

Wholesome baked flavor in every bite - these yummy snacks blend wholesome, high-quality ingredients with flavors your dog can't resist. These yummy treats are the perfect healthy snack for any dog!

3. WAGATHA DOG COOKIES

Wagatha's USDA certified organic biscuits are made using pure, honest ingredients in a fully E-carved human- grade bakery, free of wheat, gluten or fillers. Simply put, these are the world's best dog biscuits.

4. HALO LIVE-A-LITTLE NATURAL TREATS

Co-invented by Ellen DeGeneres, all of Halo's products are made with the finest quality ingredients that are free of chemicals, artificial flavors, preservatives, by-products or fillers.

5. HALO STAIN AND ODOR REMOVER FOR DOGS AND CATS

Made with natural enzymes and biodegradable cleaners. Nasty pet stains and odors are no match for this powerful, ready-to-use cleaner!

6. ASPEN ECO-PLUSH

Eco-friendly plush toys made just for your pet, featuring 100% recycled stuffing on the inside and natural wood on the outside.

7. KYJEN WATER BOTTLE BUDDIES

Cute, soft, and eco-friendly plush-covered Bottle Buddies will give your dogs irresistible crunch and crackle fun over and over again!

8. PETMATE SIGNATURE COLLARS AND LEADS

Give your pets the style and security they deserve with high-quality nylon collars and leads that integrate strength with fashion and performance.

9. PETMATE PET SAFE WATERER

Simplify your life with an automatic gravity waterer. This eco-friendly water hopper automatically fills the water reservoir when levels get low, and features a large water dispensing hole, making the bottle very easy to clean.

10. PETSTAGES OCCUPI TOY

Finally, a toy and treat combination that helps address many of the behavioral challenges your dog may exhibit at various ages! With an Occupi toy, you can keep your pet happy, busy and entertained!

11. PETMATE LOONEY LOOPS

Cats go looney for these spring-like toys perfect for batting, biting, flipping, rolling, chasing, and more.

All products are available in Bow&Wow

For more information, you may also reach us through our website www.bowandwow.com.ph or like us on facebook - www.facebook.com/bowandwow

How healthy is your baby's diet?

Here are 5 tips on how to make sure you're feeding healthy and nutritious food to your baby.

1. Always check the expiration date - never feed expired food and treats!

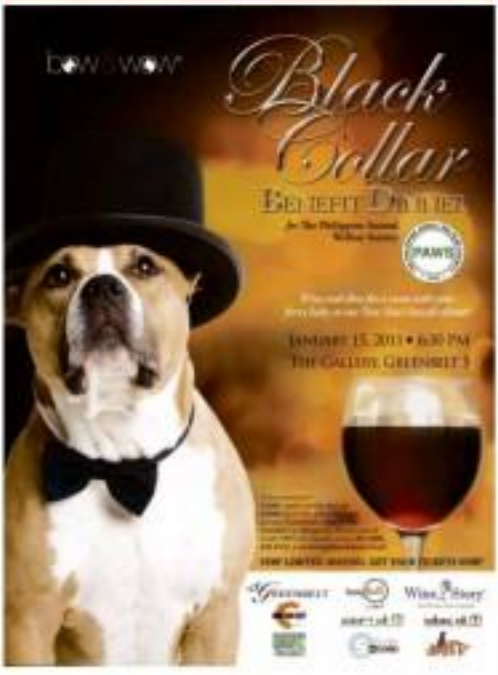
2. Food must have a good quality protein source that is named specifically, such as "chicken", "salmon", "veal", etc. rather than just "meat".

3. Ingredients should contain good quality whole grains, vitamin and mineral additives such as Vitamin C or E, and naturally-derived nutrient sources such as fruits and vegetables.

4. Ingredients must be free of harmful substances such as artificial sweeteners or flavors and carcinogenic preservatives.

5. Ingredients must be free of bulk fillers or by-products (or excess animal parts unfit for human consumption).

To ensure you are feeding your baby a healthy diet, try one of the premium all-natural food brands found in Bow & Wow. All of the carefully selected brands of food and treats in the stores are these all-natural choices for your baby. While these brands may be more expensive and harder to find, pet parents save on costly veterinary bills and give their babies the best life they deserve.



IN THIS ISSUE
■ Coming up —the redesigned RP currency /D1

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Political colors take a backseat to saving Paco Market

BUNDOK'AN Paco Market before the redevelopment

It's a unique project not just because of its gargantuan scale, but because a Marcos, an Aquino, a Lopez, and a Macapagal-Arroyo are all behind it

by Thelma Sioson San Juan

INTERIOR designer Maja Oliveros-Co says she can't forget the day she visited the Paco area in Manila. An image stood out in the sea of filth and squalor: the sight of a 3-year-old boy playing with his kite.

"I thought I would throw up," said the mother of two boys herself. "[Visit Lopez] was used to the squalor, but I wasn't."

As it turned out, not only the stench of the sewers, but more significantly, the picture of human degradation would stay with Co long after that visit. To Oak Gay she and the rest of the redevelopment are working to transform the Paco Market Redevelopment.

"This must be a new project in the Philippines, if only because it must be the only one in the country that has a Marcos, an Aquino, a Lopez and a Macapagal-Arroyo working together—age-old political rivals coming together to some way or the other for the redevelopment of one the country's oldest public markets.

Co has a flourishing career here and abroad. The designer of Harrod's Department Store and the local design collaborator in Manila for such high-end stores as Hermès and Gucci, Co—or her shops, as to speak, in top design firms in New York, where she once work clients as Ralph Lauren himself. She's now working on the design of a 140-ha vineyard in China.

Indeed, she and husband, Ramon Co Jr., a banker with the Royal Bank of Scotland, have been blessed.

But she doesn't believe the blessings of life should stop with her and her family. She joined Lopez of MBB CBD Foundation, who spearheads the rehabilitation of the Pasig River Tri-Zone up the Pasig River, they must clean up the esteros clogging Manila's waterways and the communities and establishments that have turned the river into a vast trash bin.

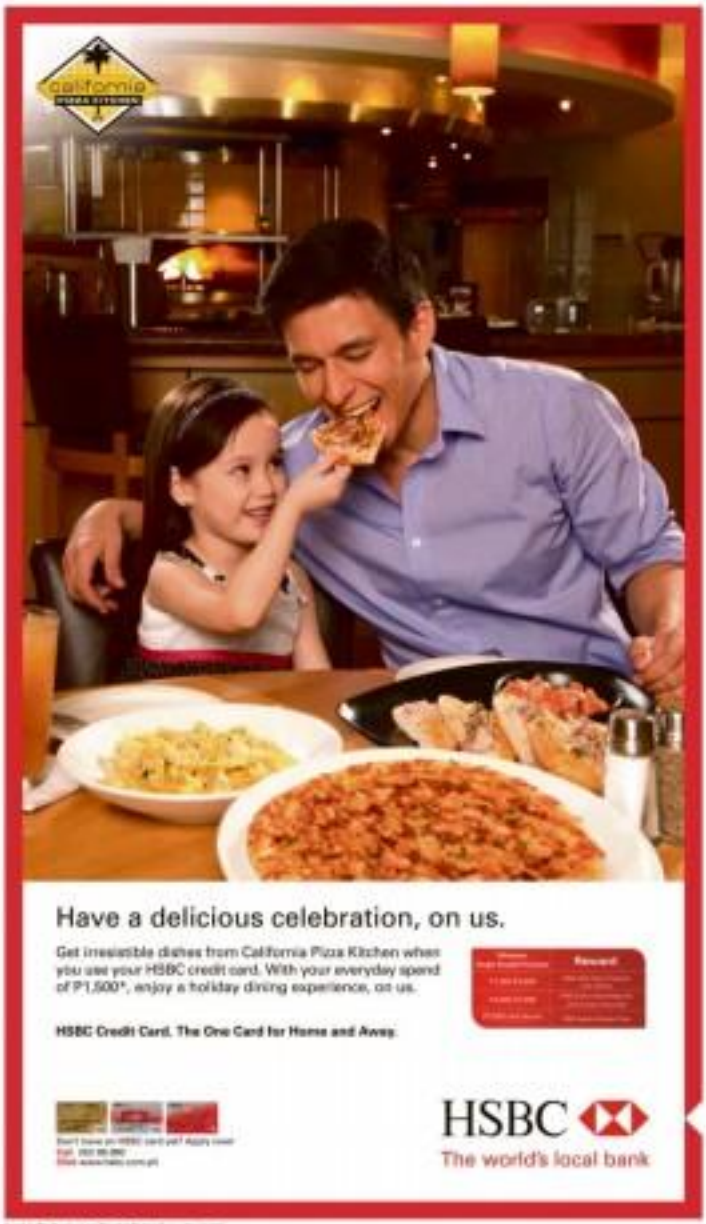
The Paco Market Redevelopment was launched in June 2010, with Lopez as project proponent, Lorna Jennings as project manager, and Co as project designer and cultural and heritage diverse.

Co and Lopez belong to the generation of Filipinos that apparently doesn't want to give up on the country and its people. To say that the Paco Market Redevelopment is ambitious is to understate the problem.

Decades of decay

Built in 1913 and designed by William Henry Parsons in the Mission revival style of architecture, Paco Market, like all...in...

POLITICAL/A2



THE ORIGINAL structure of Paco Market in vintage photo

RAMPAGKALE waits in the congested Paco Market before the redevelopment

GINA LOPEZ and Mujo Dilwana, Co with River Warriors working to clean up the Pasig River

Political colors take a backseat to saving Paco Market

From page F1

dead, all—heritage and historic structures in the country, has been in decay over the decades. But the task at hand isn't just about the redesign or restoration of a heritage structure; it is the redevelopment of the market—and more important, of the community it has sponsored through the decades.

The gargantuan task to reform perhaps everything that has to do with life in and around the market, the streets and the Pasig river—yes, down to the "long rollercoast" to the market. This was why initially the redevelopment project staff were afraid for their lives.

Paco Market's redevelopment impacts on the sustainability of the Pasig River cleanup; you can't keep the Pasig River clean until and unless the people living and working around it stop dirtying it up.

The project has five major goals.

The first is to restore the 5,000-sq.m historic structure, but using "green" architectural methods for natural and artificial lighting, water ventilation, and water and waste management.

"We're changing the roof to allow for natural lighting," says Co. "We recycle the waste into compost manure."

The conserve-preserve and habitat blocks use 192 pesetas as mortar and 5 percent from water collected from the rivers.

The second goal is mall rationalization, involving mall sizes and categories. There are now more than 800 vendors. Almost a hundred stalls will be added, the products of which should host tourists. Micro E-tutoring is also being explored for older mall holders.

The third goal is the development of an activity center, the daily activities of which will involve learning, healing and culture. With foundations and NGOs, there will be small workshops daily for acting, reciting, music and alternative health care.

Co is proud of the activity center because its activities show that the redevelopment project has "no political color" like says. "The project is being tag together y Mitrios, a Lopez, an Aquino and a Macapagal-Arroyo—it was then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who gave the P35 million seed money for the project."

The activity center will have as key resource people Fr. Tito Cobeng for community integration; Nina Lim Pascua and Zobel Ayala for literacy and children's programs; Raul Santos and Irene Marcos-Araneta for music; Dr. Omar Arabia and Dr. Ellen Zavala for wellness and metropolitan medicine; Lydia Cardenal Adams for theater and grant assistance; Lily Monteverde for film; and Butz Aquino for youth programs.

The fourth goal involves Filipino food—to have a pabrican where customers shop for fresh produce and have it cooked the way they want it.

The fifth goal is to produce and sell products made from waste and recycled materials.

> Rustan's is financing a wing—luxury retail supporting grassroots retailing. It's a significant, sentimental move—a block away from the market. Rustan's had its first store in San Marcelino 59 years ago

An entire way of life

Indeed, the redevelopment project covers the entire Filipino way of life, from historic preservation and culture to commercial sustainability, Filipino culinary experience, and location.

Co derives fulfillment from the fact that the project has brought together people from serene political and economic backgrounds and disciplines.

For instance, Rustan's sponsored the term wing by donating P12 million—a case of luxury retail supporting grass roots retailing.

The move by Rustan's bears significance stemming to the luxury retailer; it was in San Marcelino, a block away from Paco Market, that the first Rustan's store was opened by Glory Sianozo 59 years ago. Next year, when the Paco Market turns 100 years old, Rustan's will celebrate its Paco its 60th year. It has come full circle, indeed.

The redevelopment project needs P74 million. The project team has P25 million more in go. The team is hoping that President Aquino will tap the appropriate agency or cough up the P25 million.

Co has worked on many projects here and abroad. (She can't forget the day early in her career in New York, when she came face to face with Ralph Lauren in a morning meeting—and she was sweating her trademark 'Ralph' 'Armaniesse, while everybody else was in, of course, Ralph Lauren. Lauren giggled her out and said he had always admired Emmanuel's sweating.) But she considers the environment for this project unique. "Building consensus requires not only political will and social investment, but also real financial commitment to future generations.

"Sharing is not just parting with your surplus," Co says. "It is giving what you want. My son once asked me, 'Mama, why are you doing it?' And I realized, you just do it. When you come across the site and you feel you can make a difference, it doesn't matter what stage in your life you're in. You just give.

"The healing of a nation can start in small things," Co says. This is one of them.

"President Arroyo started it. New President Aquino can finish it," she says.

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim (far right) with Co and Lopez handing together for Paco Market redevelopment

ARTIST'S rendering of the redeveloped Paco Market

THASH charcoal the old market

ARTIST'S rendering of the Paco Market façade

PACO Market before it was cleaned up for redevelopment

GREEN architecture provides for natural lighting in the redesigned Paco Market.

STALLS follow standard size and product categories in the redeveloped Paco Market.

Partnerships for the Poor Foundation makes 450 hospital kids happy

WHEN YOU hear about people going ahead with their advocacies despite the fact they are not in power anymore, you would feel good.

Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, was the day the Partnerships for the Poor Foundation conducted its annual Christmas gift-giving to 450 sick children in National Children's Hospital, Philippine Medical Center and Quirino Medical Center, all in Quezon City. The foundation was formed by Dr. Gil Ejercito in 1999 with FG Bert Lavin, MMAA spiritual director.

Gabriel Ma. J. Lopez, who is a member of the board, reports:

"It was moving and touching to see the suffering poor children, including a confined cancer for the brain. One baby died while we were about to distribute the gifts. I am glad that our foundation was still able to do this modest event. God bless those children and their families."

Jewels and Join Ferrels, children of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, represented their grandparents. Linda Reyes, Evelyn Carballo and Glory Arellano were also there.

By the way the Trap Para sa Mahirap Foundation gives scholarships to poor but deserving children. Gabby Lopez and Danny Dolor are board members.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Barcarse

Ambassadors of Light give cheer

The Ambassadors of Light opened the Country Club Hotel's Christmas activities last Dec. 11, 12 and 17.

Hotel GM Philip Bartholomi attended every performance as the young people, who are eight-deprived, sang Christmas carols both in English and Tagalog. They rendered Lucio San Pedro's "Simbang Gabi" with aplomb.

For its Fundraising concert at the MCCA auditorium last week, Lourdes Lubbido-Ignacio, president of the World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, invited the Ambassadors of Light to perform.

In the audience were Imelda Boco, Bong Hernandez, Harold Uming, former dean of Philippine Women's University College of Music, and Jacqueline Lay, training program specialist of Greater Morning Center. They marveled at the singers' ability to reach high notes in their soprano and tenor voices. With Anderson Go on the organ, music and song filled the auditorium.

Tere Sevilla Boco is 0917-8718878 or Gen at 0922-883-5296.

Immaculate Conception Academy to turn 75

Immaculate Conception Academy (ICA) in Sta. Teresa in Greenhills will turn 75 in 2011.

ICA is an elementary and secondary school owned and governed by the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (MIC), a Canadian-founded congregation of women religious by Bella Bernardi. It caters to Chinese-Filipino female students.

Journalist Julie Yap Daza told me, "I am a remarkable child of both ICA and the University of Sto. Tomas, which will turn 400, also in 2011."

Julie will be a Golden Jubilarian of the UST Faculty of Philosophy and Letters (now Arts and Letters) in 2011.

HYPERMARKET

makes your Christmas all the merrier!

Preparing for the coming Noche Buena and thinking what to gift this Christmas can be mind-boggling, so here are some ideas courtesy of SM Hypermarket to make your Holidays hassle-free. No Christmas feast can ever be complete without juicy, succulent slices of ham, and we've got CDO pear-shaped and holiday whole-meat hams and SM Boneless pear-shaped hams for your dining pleasure. And if you buy ten of the same item, you'll get one more absolutely free-perfect for those big get-togethers.

The wonderful thing about Christmas Gift Baskets is that they can either be given away or its contents can be consumed (personally, we prefer the latter). So whether you're using them as presents or a great addition to your Noche Buena fare, we have a lot of choices for you in different price ranges to fit your taste and budget. Available also in SM Supermarket and SaveMore Market, our Gift Baskets range from the basic to the exquisite. Orders are also accepted; just visit any SM Food Mart near you and fill out the order slip, and we'll prepare them for you in a jiffy.

Finally, if you're looking for great gifts for your dozens of Aguinaldo or organizing a company Kris Kringle or Christmas Party raffle, may we suggest our Buy-five-get-one-free deal on small appliances: dry irons, rice cookers, water dispensers, gas stoves, rice cookers, stand fans and a lot more. Prices are very reasonable as it is, but if you buy five of the same item, we'll throw in a sixth one free-of-charge. We've also got our buy-ten-get-one-free items for even more gifting goodness.

Of course, when you visit an SM Hypermarket, you'll get other great choices for gifts, be it toys, electronics, furniture and appliances. And for your Noche Buena? The choices are endless. So come on over to SM Hypermarket and make everyone happy (and full) this Christmas.

There's something

for everyone,

whether you're naughty or nice

End the year right with your favorite McDonald's Twister Fries

Calling all Twister Fries lovers! An 20/20 kids farewell, what better way to celebrate and welcome the New Year than with your favorite Twister Fries.

Made from only the best freshest, high-quality potatoes, with each strand twisted and curled to perfection, McDonald's Twister Fries has a unique and scrumptious taste you surely won't find anywhere else. Visit the nearest McDonald's store and give in to this tempting, crispy-goodness before time runs out.

What's more, continue showing your love for Twister Fries by liking the McDonald's Facebook Fan Page at www.facebook.com/McDo.ph and discover two new fun and exciting applications- the Daily Twists and Twister Fries Mania. With these cool applications, you will surely come back running for more.

So what are you waiting for? End the year right with these cool Facebook applications while giving your taste buds a twisting good time with the one and only McDonald's Twister Fries.

Partnerships for the Poor Foundation . . .

From page F3

XIA traces its foundation to 1955-1956 when the Chinese families in Binondo requested the SBC sisters to open a school so that their children who had been baptized in the Catholic Church could be followed up in the practice or bring out of their faith.

To know more about their founder, Sister Delia Tetsuoshi, who lived a remarkable life of service, Google her name in the Internet.

'Simbang Gabi' in Global City

Bonifacio Global City (BGC) is holding an unprecedented Simbang Gabi Dec. 15-23 at 6 p.m. at the Activity Pod, 32 nd Bonifacio High Street, near Kitayo Resto.

At the same venue, ongoing until Jan. 15, 2011 is the exhibit "Wallaway: The Gift of Christmas."

A project with Church Unpliked, this exhibit will feature Christmas art installations depicting the birth of Christ. This will make families congregate and reflect on the true message of Christmas.

Another component of the Wallaway is the Christmas Box Project, a gift-giving offering for thousands of children beneficiaries of non-profit organizations. The activities are in line with BGC's Holiday Pascasi.

Pearl Manila's dawn Mass

Max Rivera, assistant manager of Pearl Manila Hotel, informed us that the hotel has been holding its own Misisang Gabi since Dec. 15 that will end Dec. 23, at the hotel lobby.

Several children choirs have been invited to perform after the Mass. Children's Joy Foundation will sing tonight. The Emilio Aguinaldo Chorale will perform on Dec. 20-24.

Christmas Eve dinner a available at affordable prices at the Seven Seas Café on the 4th floor of the hotel.

Pearl Manila is on Gen. Luna Street across Medical Center Manila.

Christmas at home for the aged

Celia Blanco, 90, from at The De Jesus

AMBASSADORS
allright and
Anderson De

GABRIEL: Lapaz, board member of the Partnerships for the Poor Foundation; Jamila Estrada, daughter of Sen. Jinggoy Estrada; and Linda Bayta during the gift-giving to sick children at the National Children's Hospital

Maria Josefa Residence and doesn't have any relatives. Only the nuns belonging to the Gerosa de Jesus de la Caridad keep her company as they do with the other elderly residents there.

The residence on Mayuhay Street (Behind Tandem Hotel) is free. Room, high, linens for the paying boarders are arranged to accommodate one in a room or two in a room. The administrator is Sister Jaqueis Mosmerya, while the Mother Superior is Sister Martina Rocco. Most of the residents are Spanish-speaking. Call 5353617.

The bedridden inpatients in Bonifacio still give a small Christmas party for the residents on Dec. 25, according to Lily San Jose, director.

Keep Jesus in your heart this Christmas, a priest in his homily said. (In our busy material things. By keeping Him close, you will feel the true spirit of Christmas...loving and forgiving.

Merry Christmas to all my readers. We have been 23 years together. The Lord be praised!

Malungai Oil's health benefits

malungai lifeOil
the pure power of mother nature

By Maribel D. Salazar

Malunggay (Moringa oleifera) has been transformed into different types of products because of its many health benefits. Several studies here and abroad have shown that malunggay offers nutrients at bigger portions compared with other fruits and vegetables. Because of this, many enterprising individuals have delved into creating products from food to oil to beauty products.

"Researches and studies around the world reveal that malunggay contains seven times more vitamin C than oranges and other vegetables," said Dr. Marifranq Santos. "It has four times more Vitamin A than carrots and three times more potassium than bananas. This is not to say though, to ditch fruits and vegetables in your diet," warned Dr. Bacco.

The Philippines' Food and Nutrition Research Institute-Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST) did their own study in the many health benefits of malunggay. Malunggay, according to FNRI-DOST, can be used as "food, feeds, medicine, dye or water purifier, hedge, fertilizer, pesticide, rope, soft wood, and even live fence."

All parts of the tree are edible. In the Philippines, the leaves are used for soups especially for lactating mothers because it is believed that malunggay can help increase the supply of breast milk. The leaves can also be dried and crushed into powder to become a food additive. This may be helpful to children who just cannot eat their veggies. Malunggay "pods taste like asparagus when tender. Young and mature seeds are called edible. The thick, soft roots are used as a substitute for horseradish," the DOST study says.

In some countries, especially in Asia where malunggay is moderate, the leaves, bark roots, flowers, and seeds are used in traditional or alternative medicine. But it should have to take tons of malunggay to achieve its natural effect. "It is used to treat rheumatism, sensitivous bites, and stomach disorders."

Dr. Bacco, a pediatrician and health advocate, said that there have been undocumented testimonies of the benefits of malunggay. Scientific studies have been conducted to prove these claims. The FNRI has been conducting seminars in the country to promote the regular consumption of malunggay. The government body is convinced of the increasing available of vegetables by Filipinos which leads to low micronutrients intake in the body.

Compared with other food supplements, Malunggay Life Oil (MLO) is able to preserve chlorophyll found in malunggay. The process of converting MLO into capsule form was developed by Manila Nature's Link Corp. In such a way that no part of the malunggay loss goes to waste, it was made sure that the vitamins and minerals the tree contains are preserved.

The fact that malunggay seeds yield 38-40 percent edible oil makes it a cost-easier to convert it to capsule form. "The refined oil is clear, odorless, and most important, stable."

Malunggay is also said to help in the treatment of digestive disorders like colitis or inflammation of the colon, diarrhea, and ulcer or gastritis. The "phenomenal tree" contains fiber that cleanses the colon and stimulates the intestine making for easy food digestion. The gums acts if contains helps prevent fat build up in the liver while boosting the digestive system.

"The moringa seed extract is also used for the treatment of skin diseases. It has Vitamin E and antioxidant that help in preventing skin cancer. Malunggay has components that work as antiseptic and has a strong inflammatory agent used to skin diseases.

Malunggay, even with all the other products available in the market today, still has a lot of potential that needs to be explored. With its somewhat hectic appearance, malunggay's effectiveness and healing components make it a phenomenon.

Malunggay has shown its versatility and many people have attested to its effectiveness. And with the way the healthcare landscape in the country is going, where individuals opt for something natural, malunggay's potential is still being explored and health-conscious individuals still have something to look forward to.

Malunggay Life Oil is available at Watsons and Mercury Drug outlets, South Star Drug, Century Chinese Drug Stores (SM Malls), Ennsaflor Drugstore, Rustan's, and Farmacia Peralta. It is manufactured by Manila Nature's Link Corp., Unit 1606 Orient Square Building, F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 474-2409 or log on to www.malungaiilife.com. For a free sample of Malungai Life Oil, text LIFEOIL and send to 2600.

Malunggay's leaves, bark, roots, flowers, and seeds can be used in traditional or alternative medicine

IN THIS ISSUE
■ 'Is Tita Tessa a real person?' /E1

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Finally—Harry Winston in Manila

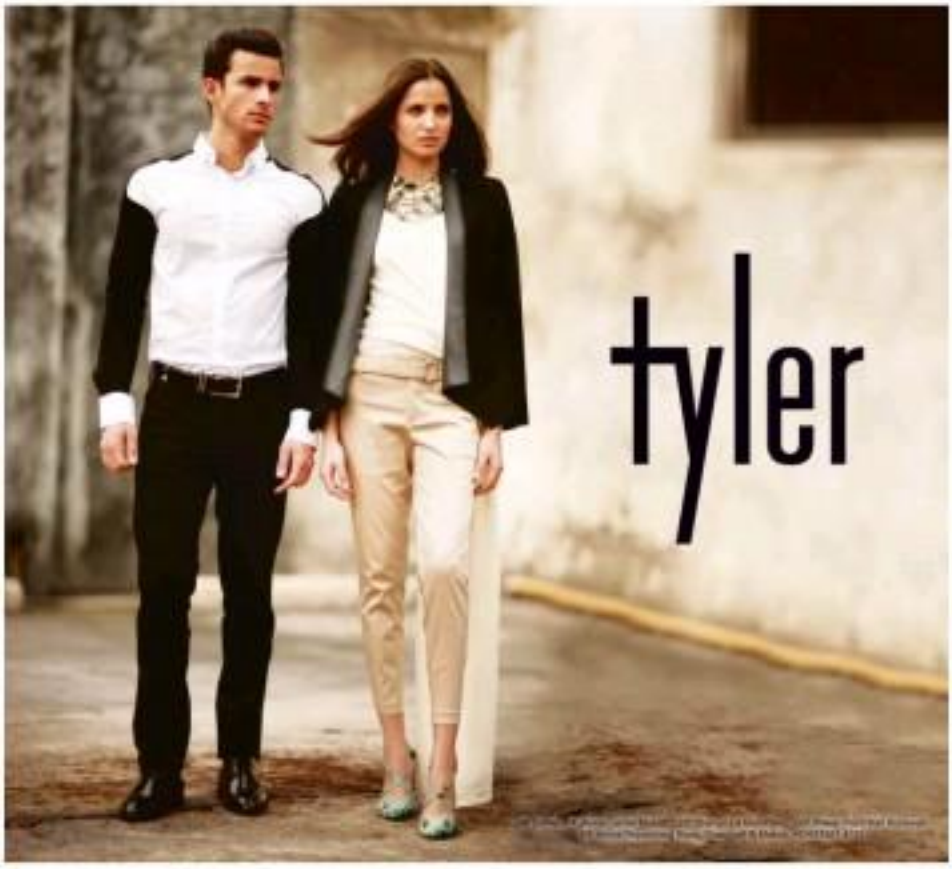
The salon at Adora in Greenbelt 5—only its 20th in the world—carries both jewelry and watches

By Cherbe Y Mead

IT'S AN inspiring note of confidence that Harry Winston, renowned jeweler to the stars, would make its name and open a salon—only its 20th in the world—in the Philippines.

On Dec 11, salon in Greenbelt 5,

HARRY Winston Avenue 42 Automatic with baguette diamonds



REACTIONS TO LIFE. Cavestany says her works straddle the confessional and the experimental.

Valeria Cavestany's art of surprise

PLAYING WITH FUNERAL. 'Guardian' stang became associate props, above; her colors remain vivid, below.

'Let Me Entertain You,' the artist declares in her new show

By Joseph Cortes
Contributor

VALERIA CAVESTANY has had enough of angst. That's why her latest show, "Let Me Entertain You," on view until Dec. 31 at Hasde, celebrates joy in German poet and philosopher Friedrich Schiller described it: "All are to dedicated to joy."

"Openings are boring," she said. That's why to round out her frozen, instead of the usual art opening, she staged a party where guests could come, look at her art, have a drink and dance the night away. It was a novel concept that she hit on by accident.

"Since the title of my show is 'Let Me Entertain You,' I thought why not entertain Full Mail," she said. "I wanted an event where people can come because have a good time. So, I thought why not have a party?"

The whole party-opening is proof that Cavestany's art is evolving. From her signature Chinese-inspired art and still life during her early years as an artist, her art-making has evolved into something fluorescent, something that draws your attention by blending pop with vivid color and huge images.

All the oil-filled pieces are bigger because the venue is also bigger. And given the wide space at Hasde, she is bringing out her functional art of flower arrangements pieces in a variety of shapes and animal forms. The art pieces serve as unusual lamps—the forms are pouched with bulbs where light from a bulb cascades down through—and even shades for the bulb areas.

"One day, I was just playing with the material," she said. "I do not see anything as garbage. I see quotidian things, found objects, the stuff of everyday life. One thing led to another. If you just keep on working, the inspiration will come to you."

Between 2 continents

Born in Barcelona, Spain, to a Catalan father and a Filipino mother, Cavestany had roots in two countries between Europe and the Philippines for years. However, she confesses that she is more at home in the Philippines. She feels she is truly more Filipino than anything else.

Although she took up a career in textile design in Barcelona, she traces her real artistic development to her meeting with Raul Pasco-Perez when she studied Art History under him at the Asian Institute of Art. She was then studying Asian History at UP Diliman and trying Chinese painting.

"Dr. Pasco-Perez saw what I was doing, and he believed in me," said Cavestany. "He gave me my first opportunity to follow as Gabriela de los Islas."

From that on, her career picked up, and she was accustomed to exhibits twice a year.

It was Hasde that gave her a second opportunity. The show took her two years to finish, and she said she changed as an artist as she worked on it.

Through the years, she has been able to let go of her inseciurities as an artist, particularly the need to have an academic background to be a credible artist.

"I am self-taught," she declared. "For a long time, that being like a burden on me, that I didn't have the needed academic background to be a real artist. But that observation is gone now. I now realize that you have to study but not necessarily in school. You have to persevere in what you do, and you have to believe in yourself."

Personal, experimental

But "Let Me Entertain You," Cavestany said the pieces read the five confessional and the experimental. She paints her own lives in life, her family and friends, recording her experiences, such as her travels around the globe, particularly Africa. And all her canvases are vivid colors, from bright blue to deep red, shocking pink and citrus orange.

The animal pieces come out in her functional art where she sculpts fiberglass into a hippopotamus, deer, frog and even a cat. The shapes are only secondary to her embellishment of her sculptures with beads and paint in her snowbirds a fantasy world populated by animal and anthropomorphic shapes.

If her pieces seem happy, it's because they are. It is her reassurance to the brooding artist tradition of the Pleva.

Moreover, she is no longer affected by criticism that her works are decorative and commercial.

BAGS BY SOPIA. Silk-batik bags that are proudly Philippine-made

LARGE SCALE. The artist, who considers herself very Filipino, uses bursts of bright colors in her paintings, including bigger pieces as she matures.

A FLAVORIST duet in her natural imagery

"I want to be commercial, too," she said. "I want to be able to sell."

An empty canvas doesn't scare her at all. She makes an effort to dirty it as soon as possible, like less inspiration take her to where her art should go. And as she matures as an artist, she sees herself working on bigger pieces, a far cry from her early days as an artist when she was doing watercolor.

"All art is about the power of surprise," she said. "It is just a recombination of elements. What haven't been painted yet? I am not because, I am only Valeria. I want to be in time with what I am doing."

Shopinas makes online Christmas shopping simple

A FLAGSHIP service of Ayt! Global Inc., the newest company under the Lara Group of Companies, Shopinas gives you a complete end-to-end solution—from the time you register and shop to the moment your package is delivered to your doorstep.

Being the Philippines' first e-commerce website that combines beautifully designed online stores, customers and sellers are guaranteed a secure payment system and courier delivery by Ayt!1 and FedEx. No need to go to the bank or do snail-ugo, since payments can be made via credit card, Banknet ATM card or PayPal.

"Everything is backed by one of the country's most trusted courier services, Ayt 21, and Shopinas-verified stores and mall for a receipt of purchase.

Look through an array of stores selling an interesting mix of merchandise, from health drinks and fashion to sports equipment and gadgets. You will also find unique items sold by young Filipino entrepreneurs.

For inquiries, e-mail support@shopinas.com or call 8378824 and 8784416. To shop or start selling as a fully customized e-store, link up with www.shopinas.com.

New year countdown

Celebrate New Year's Eve in style at Teakers Hotel Manila's T Lounge, the skybar club of the Orange La-managed hotel for the top.

Witness spectacular fireworks displays from new heights at the opening to the '70s, '80s and '90s events of the coolest Magic Mashers DJ in town, Jon Tiapz of Magic 89.9.

Cocktails will be served with a wide selection of canapés, bars of savories and beverages. The night will excite cheers over a glass of champagne to mark the entry of the year 2011.

See party ticket, good for two, is priced at P3,000 inclusive of 10 percent service charge and applicable 12.5 percent government tax.

To book tickets, call 8201011 or e-mail reservations.tmm@shangri-la.com.

Food fair at Rockwell

Visit Nic's Bakeshop at Gabel's Dunes Fair in Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati.

NIC'S booth at Rockwell

It offers a wide variety of cakes and pastries, breads and crisps and gourmet smoked delicacies.

Gift items are priced P75 and up.

The fair runs until Dec. 23, 10 a.m. / 10 p.m.

For more information, call 7166833, 7166321 <visit nics bakeshop.multiply.com>

Finally—Harry Winston in Manila

From page B1

Makati, unveiled the Harry Winston salon on its ground floor, carrying both jewelry and watch collections. The salon will also offer customer-making services, according to Mr. Winston president Ernest T. Pomeroy.

It was 1943 when Harry Winston secured the moniker "Jeweler to the Stars." The renown Jewelry Store was that year's Academy Best Actress trophy wearing the American jeweler's baubles. That milestone would establish a winning tradition for the company, as contemporary Hollywood stars like Gwyneth Paltrow and Halle Berry would also go on to win their Academy plates dripping in Harry Winston diamonds.

("Ring of Diamonds" is another Harry Winston reimagined.)

Every celebrity of note, from Madonna to Charlize Theron to Nicholas Sparks, has worn a Harry Winston on the red carpet.

In 1989, hinging on its heritage of fine jewelry-making, the company expanded its range as it delved into watch-making, some of which would go on to win awards in the competitive watch-making industry. Two of the timepiece collections, Avenue and Ocean, are featured in the opening of its salon today.

"The Avenue and Ocean collections reflect two of our most iconic and popular timepieces (that) for men and women," says Harry Winston CEO and president Frederic de Narp.

"The Avenue collection is very much inspired by the glamour and energy of New York City, home to Harry Winston's cultural and creative headquarters. Pieces are more streamlined and refined, with strong rectangular shapes and set with Harry Winston's iconic arch motif, matching the architecture of Winston's flagship salon on Fifth Avenue in New York. The full collection playsoff the idioms of geometry and perspective to create a range of styles that appeal to a variety of client preferences. Ocean, the timeless Avenue Classic to the bold Avenue Squared or the very distinct Avenue Mini," he adds.

Fine watch-making

Meanwhile, the Ocean collection provides the ideal setting to showcase fine watch-making complications. Whether a chronograph, dual time-zone, retrograde phase, or tourbillon, it offers an impressive range of sophisticated mechanisms. The collection's pieces dial elements off-centered functions, while the winding crowns on the side of the case ergonomically invite the watch's enthusiastic wearer. True to Winston style, each watch captures a modern balance of sporty elegance.

While it doesn't have the century-old heritage of some of the world's top watch-making brands, Harry Winston has partnered with experts in haute watch-making to achieve some of the most stunning timepieces sought by connoisseurs.

But it doesn't hurt on looks alone. Harry Winston has created avant-garde complicated watches that have earned the nod of the industry, including the award-winning Opus series, Histoire de Tourbillon and the Project Z, which is made of the Harry Winston-exclusive alloy called Zalium.

In creating complicated timepieces, says Mr Diop, "Harry Winston has been coached, but, my humble enough, to collaborate with the most innovative independent watchmakers. I think this strategy(sic) we allow in this arena has allowed Harry Winston to not only distinguish itself in the market, but also allowed the brand to more successfully establish itself as a leading investment within a shorter span of time."

In only 20 years, he notes that some of the brand's exclusive movements and timepieces and their designs have quickly become collector's items. In 2007, the company also opened its own watch-making facility in Geneva, where it produces its own cases, bracelets and dials. This, he says, underscores the brand's commitment to its timepiece business.

True connoisseur

The Harry Winston client may not always be a celebrity, but one that's a true connoisseur, says Du Narp.

"When clients come to Harry Winston, it is to celebrate the most meaningful moments in their lives—a wedding, birthday, birth of a child, professional achievement—and therefore have an expectation for meaningful pieces, as well."

The brand has already started a handful and highly exclusive distributors, says Mr Diop, in order for "their clients to receive the products "in the best environments."

FREDERIC de Narp, Harry Winston CEO and president, with actress Halle Berry

HARRY Winston Avenue Classic Lady Tourbillon. Avenue Squared in rose gold with diamonds

"For many years now, Harry Winston has had a devoted presence in the region, aligning with some of the strongest partners to distribute our fine timepieces and high complication watches. With this new opening, we have found an ideal venue, (partnering with Ayala) we further showcase our collections of fine jewelry and timepieces, and look forward to serving our existing clients, as well as opening our doors to new clients."

HARRY Winston Avenue C Midsize

HARRY Winston Project Z6 with Anthracite dial and silver-cheek complication

National Book Store LiKES
Emergency Tools
Follow National Book Store on facebook and twitter

The dream AmiSa home is fast taking shape as glimpse of which could be seen from an airplane when one flies over it.

THE Tower A of AmiSa Private Residences' turnover of units in Tower A of the AmiSa Private Residences, the residential component of the development, has started, allowing the unit owners to celebrate their first Christmas in their new home.

Live an 'endless holiday' lifestyle

IN AmiSa, spending an endless holiday is not just a possibility, but a sweet dose of reality.

AmiSa paints a picture of bliss in scenic Cebu for those who want a weekend getaway every single day'

By Kenneth M. del Rosario

Imagine coming home to a place where spending endless holidays is not just a possibility but a sweet dose of reality.

It's like having a home perfect for any weekend getaway or long vacation. With an ever-hectic pace of lifestyle nowadays – balancing work and personal lives, one can use a little more than a sprinkling of relaxation at the end of the day.

Because people today have put more importance on their valuable time, it's important now more than ever to have everything one needs within reach, without unraveling style and comfort. A home integrated of true a self-sufficient community is a must.

This picturesque scenario of bliss is exactly what Robinsons Land Corporation had in mind three years ago when it launched AmiSa – the company's first master-planned leisure resort community in Mactan, Cebu.

That's because in AmiSa, the fresh scent of the sea is enough to take the day's stress away, inspired by the beautiful architecture and environment of Gold Coast, Australia.

AmiSa capitalizes on the naturally breathtaking backdrop that surrounds the property's three major architectural elements – the condominium towers; the hotel; and the entertainment center.

AmiSa is part of the ever-expanding reach of Robinsons Land Corporation, one of the most profitable businesses of JG Summit Holdings Inc. Cebu's peace and order, and its lucrative status as tourism hotspot and a center for Visayas commercial activities were cited in selecting the venue for Robinsons Land Corporation's first leisure project. Moreover, JG Summit Holdings has roots in coming to Cebu, as founder John Gokongwei Jr. began his post-war trading business in his hometown.

AmiSa stands on a prime six-hectare property with a 220-meter beachfront in Punta Engaño shorter in Mactan. It is named after the founder's term for an object of enjoyment, beauty or pleasure – what Robinsons Land Corporation actually envisioned the development to be. The project is aptly branded under Robinsons Lamudo, the premium property brand of the Robinsons Land Corporation Residential Division.

This dream home is fast taking shape – a glimpse of which could be seen from an airplane when one flies over it.

In fact, turnover of units in Tower A of the AmiSa Private Residences, the residential component of the development, has started, allowing the unit owners to celebrate their first Christmas in their new home. The residents now have access to the clubhouse, gym, and pool that have been completed together with Tower A.

Soon, unit owners will be enjoying the other amenities that AmiSa offers – a karaoke room, mini-theater, game room, hiking and jogging trail, multi-purpose court, beach volleyball and Frisbee area, al fresco dining at the picnic area, a playground, spa, and restaurant suites.

As if that wasn't yet enough to put the Christmas cheer on, unit owners would be pleased to know that magnificent views await them every single day – with units having balconies that assure them of a seaview or a view of the mountains.

It's the gift of a holiday lifestyle – a fitting reward to the successful individual that is the AmiSa unit owner.

With the positive response that Robinsons Land Corporation has received from the launch of Tower A, they have followed it up by offering the 18-storey Tower B, the construction of which is on going and the topping off ceremony of which has recently been marked, and the 19-storey Tower C, which is currently in its pre-selling stage.

The launch of the three towers means more options for each unit's view, delivery schedule, and payment terms as one selects the perfect AmiSa investment for his vacation lifestyle.

Through it all, Robinsons Land Corporation remains enthusiastic towards the project, just as AmiSa continues to herald revered by foreign investors and businessmen from Manila, Visayas and Mindanao.

Truly, when you're living in such a perfect place as this, who wouldn't want a never-ending holiday?

For more information on AmiSa, contact (032) 397-8301, 438-0888, or 0922-8588888, or visit www.robinsonslamudo.com.

MAGNIFICENT views await unit owners every single day.

AMISA's clubhouse, pool, and gym have also been completed together with Tower A.

THE hotel is another highlight – a fitting reward to the successful individual that is the AmiSa unit owner.

AMISA is located at Punta Engaño district in Mactan, Cebu.

IN THIS ISSUE
■ A first look at the house that Manny built /C3

Sunday LIFESTYLE

To feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

Pangarap mo bang mamalo ng brand new Honda Civic? O ng exciting gadgets? Then join Philam Life's
Plano Mo, Pwedeng Manalo!
To join, simply update your contact information!
Text: PLANO (space) Policy No./Policyowner's Full Name/Birthday(MMDDYY)/Email/Landline and send to 2200.
Call (02) 526-2000 for inquiries.
PHILAM LIFE

'Check out the Fort! What's in Fort Santiago?'

Back to the future with Hubert

IT'S NOT like he was looking up to a score for the last 15 years. But the recently fired tsismis Hubert Webb might as well have been, if the tweets of a certain @iamhubertwebb.com anything to go by.

Leave it to the Pinoy to find humor in an otherwise sensitive and very polarizing situation. Mostly after Webb's acquittal and release from jail on Sunday, a new account called @iamhubertwebb was created on Twitter, detailing the musings of a guy suddenly thrown into freedom—and Year 2010—after over a decade behind bars.

(The owner of the Twitter account is unknown, who called only in to public profile as "Fired Hubert Webb.")

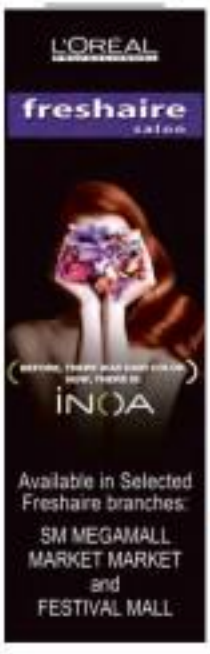
The social networking site, as well as other technologies/achievements, were yet created when Webb was sent to the slammer in 1995. In fact, the in-gadget then were beepers, as @iamhubertwebb's first tweet reference: "on way to Vito Cruz Mall to trade in my beeper." (Meanwhile, 15-year-old kids are wondering what a beeper is.)

The many cultural references of "Webb's" subsequent tweets are as right on, Pinoys who read them—well, those who lived through the 1990s, at least—are known to go on laughing fits.

@iamhubertwebb, which has nearly 4,000 followers, is an amusing nostalgic trip. Funny just how much you could relate on to 15 years. But maybe not so funny when you nearly served in jail.

Our favorites:

- Guys, Freedom Party for me tonight! See you at Blues drawl!!!
- Tol? What happened to Hubert???
- Moving this party to Euphoria.
- Philo na ring Euphoria???!! Fine. Line in drawl so long.
- Just relentless on Dyslexia & Booze. If a guys are still game, Call/Shout/It's on me.
- Guys, who has Season 2? I didn't get to complete my "Friends" VCDs.



Gifts and Graces Foundation offers presents with a purpose

GIFTS AND Graces Foundation will be at the Neal Bazaar from today until December 23 in Ayala Malls serving Christmas gift suggestions for a good cause. Gifts and Graces sources goods from some 20 disadvantaged communities, from urban poor women to people with disabilities, helping improve their way of life.

Such items include travel sets, dictionary bowls, tarp bags, bag charms, handmade paper, and many more, available at outlets such as Bulacan Pilipinto, Nanay's and the Tahanan Village Hotel's Lobby Shop. Check out some of the products available through the foundation.

GADGET organizer, made by urban poor women, by special order

CHARGING station. Charge cell phones and gadgets in style, made of wood by persons with disabilities, by special order

SCARVES, made by the Bukidnon weavers in Sarangguni, by special order

CLUTCH bag designed by Joey Samson, Kam Desiree by former migrant workers in Japan, designed for Inquirer's "Face Off" fashion show

COFFEE sleeves, made by urban poor women

FOLDABLE bag, made by urban poor women

HANDMADE paper card, made by women in Quezon province

PICNIC baskets, made out of directory pages. Available in light brown finish with red straps and lining, or dark brown finish with green straps and lining

BAG designed by Patricia Ramos-Diaz for "Face Off"

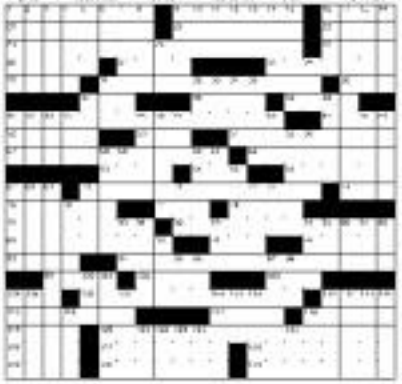
TOTE bag, made out of newspapers and directory pages

BAG designed by Bernhardt Ramos, handwoven by former migrant workers in Japan, designed for INQUIRER "Face Off"

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD By Fredrick A. Lorayo

UNDER LOG AND KEY



ANSWERS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

Credit card holiday promos

By Annette D. Tayao

AS THE Christmas shopping craze becomes more and more hectic, people start looking for more ways to help ease the holiday stress.

One can reach the sales and promos spanning left and right, or you could just carry on your usual shopping chat'll give you more rewards, rewarding shopping—like a Citibank credit card.

"We realize that the holiday season is really when you'll spend more," says Citi public affairs and corporate citizenship director Jeanette Ng Lim.

Shop for Christmas gifts at any Rustan Specialties Inc. (SSI)-established, for instance, and get up to three percent rebate on your purchases. These include Banana Republic, Calvin Klein, Debenhams, Kiss, Parfit, Gucci, Kenneth Cole, Lacoste, Mary Jacobs, Mayka & Kreiner, New Wave, Panda, Ralph Lauren, Salvatore Ferragamo, Tory Burch, Tous, Wigs.

There's also a 5-percent rebate on all other purchases.

If you're worried about Mocha Banana, it's best to run to Rustan's Supermarket or Shoppesa. Every purchase worth a Citi Rustan's card there earns one a five percent rebate. It's also wise to keep those charge slips, as every 15,000 accumulated spending will get you a free jamon de Jabi. Accumulate P28,000 and there's a free Iberia boat ready for your spread.

CITIBANK Rustan's Platinum and Gold cards

CITI Cards Business Group VP Martha Agoda Borja and public affairs and corporate citizenship director Jeanette Ng Lim

If your family would rather dine out, Citi has partnered with over 1,000 outlets that offer 50 percent off and buy-1-take-1 promotions.

Every small purchase can earn you useful Citi rewards. Every P1,500 single receipt purchase lets you choose from the following free items: Hallmark gift wrappers at National Book Store; Gum-Gum products, redeemable at Human's supermarkets, Shoppesa and Robinsons supermarkets; or parking passes at participating Ayala Malls and Robinsons Malls.

Citi has also received a special gift for its clients, both old and new: a Longchamp Le Pliage Neo/Le Pliage LM Metal Handbag. Most Citi clients, or other relevant cardholders, who apply and are approved before Jan. 31, 2011, for the Citibank Rustan's Platinum card, automatically get the bag for free. Existing cardholders also get the bag for free through referrals.

If you're approved for the Citibank Rustan's Gold card, on the other hand, you get the bag at 60 percent off, and just pay the remaining 40 percent for only P288 a month for 12 months.

"It's very attractive. We're already getting a lot of reaction," says Lim. "We've had to talk to Rustan's to say, 'We've got to buy your whole stock.'"

Citi holiday promos, except for the Longchamp bag, are ongoing till Jan. 31. Visit www.citibank.com.ph.

LONGCHAMP LM Metal 1623 Bronze

LONGCHAMP LM Metal 1623 Steel

WHAT'S UP

Special New Year hotel packages

THE INTERCONTI-nental Manila offers families and guests special room packages to celebrate the New Year at the hotel and on its Countdown Party. On Dec. 31, from 11 p.m. onwards, a Welcome 2011 Party will take place at the Grand Ballroom. For only P1,800 net per person, partygoers will enjoy live band music by Rhythm and Basics and indulge in a cocktail buffet spread with free-flowing non-alcoholic drinks, plus two standard alcoholic drinks. Free party hats and noisemakers will be given to everyone.

To make New Year's Eve even special, the hotel is offering special room packages valid on Dec. 31 only. For only P9,888 net, guests can stay overnight in a Deluxe Room inclusive of two Welcome 2011 Party tickets at the Grand Ballroom and buffet breakfast or lunch for two at the Café Jeepney on Jan. 1, 2011.

Club Room and Junior Suite rates are also available at P11,888 net and P12,888 net, respectively. Guests in either a Club Room or suite with this above rates will have complete access to the Club InterContinental Lounge and free Welcome 2011 party tickets.

The Club InterContinental Lounge offers exclusive services such as express check-in and check-out, complimentary breakfast, afternoon tea and cocktails, one of Internet each stations and private conference room, butler service, free pressing of one suit or gown and 50 percent discount on massage services.

Call 1001000, Room Packages.com subject to availability and are valid only for local residents. Visit InterContinental Manila's Facebook page.

'Check out the Fort . . .

From page B1

► Billing time with my bankguns.

► Why's everyone telling me to check out Fort? What's in Fort Strategic?

► Yes! They upgraded my bumper to a cellular phone! Yes! Yes! What a good deal.

► What does this text mean?! It's just [illegible]—"set a x? to be x."

► Preparing for my Puerto Azul R&R: Must & Sun—check, Ocean Pacific—check, Sunscreen—check.

► Hoping to bump into my Top 5—Anjanette Abayari, Amanda Paige Lee, Dia Rajeswaran, Hazeena Motawal, Denali Custodio, Hilton.

► Is watching "Beverly Hills 90210." Quarantine long. What bumpkins?!?!

► Picking up some Christmas gifts at Blue Magic and Thigpenwerkz.

The new Our Home store showcases merchandise in a theatre inspired to give shoppers a more intimate shopping experience.

OUR HOME'S NEW LOOK AT SM SOUTHMALL

For many years, Our Home has been known for its Great Designs at Great Prices. And with the recent opening of its new store at SM Southmall, it continues to draw customers with an exciting new concept.

The 1,600 square meter store has a Euro and minimalist feel with a very clear approach to flexibility. Things can be changed with ease, making the store easy to merchandise. More than just the look, it also offers European style furniture that can compete with the pricey counterparts available in the country.

Celebrity Interior Designer Tessa Prieto-Valdes graced the occasion and shared with Our Home General Manager Sonny Yap how she was amazed with the store's transformation – from the new logo to the interiors in its mostly black and white furniture and accessories, and to the way the items are presented.

The new Our Home store is more sophisticated and upscale, and designed for leisurely shopping. All merchandise selections are made in the context of lifestyle as opposed to mass merchandise, giving shoppers a more intimate shopping experience.

Mom of the merchandise is European inspired, reflecting Our Home's taste and style authority. The center patio introduces furniture and accessories as lifestyle vignettes, while the perimeter area holds the smaller print and odd sized items like the mattresses and carpets.

Designed by Prism Design, the new Our Home store has a neutral background of grays, whites, and light woods. Color, however, continues to be experienced through brightly colored sign panels and cash registers. The ceiling feels very residential and refined, hiding most of the directional light used to spot or feature the merchandise grouping.

Visit the new Our Home store located at the Second Level of the Fast Wing of SM Southmall.

Photos by: Erwin Barrido, Jiggie Hagenbirino and Noel Pupal.

Celebrity Interior Designer Tessa Prieto-Valdes graced the ribbon cutting ceremony during the opening of the new Our Home Southmall, joining her are Our Home General Manager Reynold J. Yap, 5th from left; Our Home consultant Bougi Zapanta, Our Home AVP for Operations Roy Tan, Our Home AVP for Marketing Justine Origalelo Hamal, Our Home AVP for Operations Diana Oy Lim and Our Home Division Merchandise Manager Cora Runa.

The new Our Home Southmall welcomes shoppers with a more sophisticated and minimalist European inspired look.

Vignettes are incorporated in the store merchandise display.

Neutral color palette in gray, white and light wood dominates the store's main interior.

A more sophisticated and minimalist selection of merchandise is what shoppers can expect from the new Our Home store.

WHAT'S IN STORE: A NEW EURO LOOK

Euro inspired furniture and accessories mostly in black and white colors are available in the store.

Please take a seat with Our Home's collection of minimalist designed accent chairs.

Sleekly designed accent chairs in black and white colors.

Mix-n-bandas like these plump pillows and accent chair are beautifully displayed in the store.

Sleekly designed lamps in black and white collection.

The Wall Framer section.

Brightly colored sign panels like the one in this sleeping zone area complements the neutral colors of the store.

Our Home's Curtain section.

Pillows and lamps section of the store.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

The filmmaker comes home

Award-winning director Brillante Mendoza goes back to his roots at SM City Pampanga

IT WAS a homecoming of sorts for internationally acclaimed film director Brillante Mendoza when he showcased four of his award-winning films at SM City Pampanga Cinema 8. Born in Pampanga, he has, in the last few years, brought great honor not only to his hometown, but to the rest of the Philippines, thanks to his films.

The two-day event, which featured four

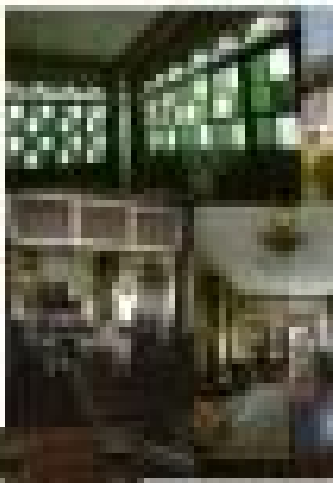
TIETO, REYMUNDO T.

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed film director Brillante Mendoza led the ribbon-cutting ceremony of his film festival at SM City Pampanga. With him are Philippine Daily Inquirer's Tonette Orejas, SM VP for marketing Millie Dizon, MAP Angeles chapter president Ben Pila, SM City Pampanga mall manager Lana Endoc and cinema mall manager Jonie Evaldo.

BRILLANTE Mendoza with third-year students of Pampanga High School beside the "Lola" panel. "Lola" is about two elderly women who bear the consequences of a crime involving their respective grandsons—one is the victim, the other the suspect. The film has won numerous awards—Best Film in the Bisi Nuno International Film Festival in Italy; Best Film in Cinematography at the Durban International Film Festival; Best Director, Best Sound, and Best Film at the Golden Screen Award of the Entertainment Press; the Grand Knight Award at the Nara Film Festival; Best Film, Best Actress and Best Photography in the Los Palmas Film Festival in Spain; and the Ecumenical Jury Award at the Fribourg Film Festival in Switzerland.

KITE (kite in movie) reunites from Holy Angel University pose with Brillante beside the "Kakilo" panel. "Kakilo," about a swaddled family after 9/11, Pinatubo eruption, won the 2007 Netpac Award at the Jeonju International Film Festival, the Best Actress Award at Dubai International Film Festival in 2008; and the Best Film, Best Performer, Best Screenplay, Best Achievement in Cinematography Awards at the Young Critics Circle in 2005.

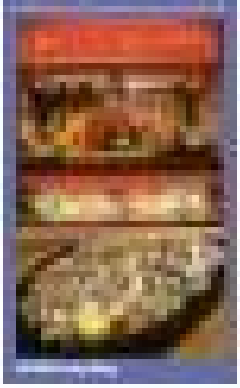
BRILLANTE Mendoza with Pampanga Gov. Lilia Pineda and Board Member Trina Dizon



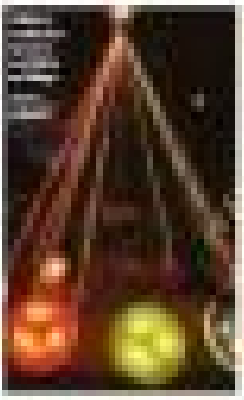
From wealth to war

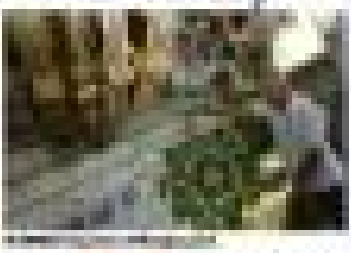
Imposed taxes' outbreak in San Fernando include Aldo Duterte and Bloodiest Attack Marks

Pampanga's favorite food stops

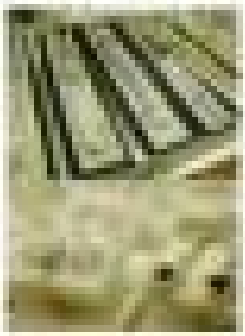


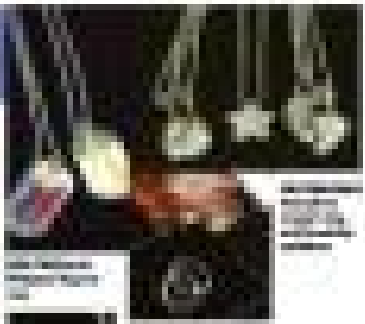
Where it's always a holiday



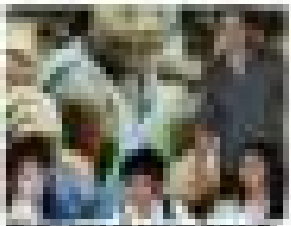


Top fashion brand, trendy jewelry —all proudly Kapampangan





The filmmaker comes home



Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.
So, thank you, we're really very flattered.

But for all our friends who know
that they deserve more than an imitation:
We want to set the record straight.

Havaianas has one origin – Brazil.
We don't have factories anywhere else.
We don't have overruns.
We don't sell factory defects.
And we are not sold in markets, bazaars, mega sales
or online in social networking sites.

We do have an All New 2011 Havaianas Collection
(As comfy, cool and colorful as ever!)
And they're found only in our friendly
authorized retailers - nationwide:

METRO MANILA
All Flip-Flops
Aloha Boardsports
Cebu
Duty Free Philippines Fiesta Mall
Gas
J&S Surfshop
Kidsports
Manila Yacht Club
Moana
Nail Spa
Orange Juice
RDX
Rustan's Department Store
Saddle Brown
Stoked
Tick-Tock, Flip-Flop
Urban Athletics

LUZON
All Flip-Flops
Amaya Shop
Boston Café
CABA
Café Hobbes Boston Café
Cafe Ropesa
DOTS Fashion Novelty Shop
F2M
Fashion Outlet
High Tide Store
Kapahuan Vista Resort
Kewies & Chokkitto's
Le Kitsch Lifestyle Shop
Manila's Delicacies
Mag Café/Patiche
Playa Tropical Resort Hotel
Red Dot Apparel & Accessories
Red Dot Boutique
Red Dot Specialty Shop
Royal Subic Duty Free
Soleil Et Lune
Sunkissed Beach Shack
Tantrum
Tutti Footie
Wardrobe and Me

VISAYAS
7R Store
Abaca Boutique Hotel
All Flip-Flops
All Flip-Flops by the Beach
Amanika Resort
Ballroomey Shoppe
Discovery Stores Boracay
Fridays Beach Resort
Hayahay
It's a Shore Thing
July
Latte Coffee Cafe
Learning Gallery
Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort
Nami Private Villas
Ormoc Villa Hotel
Pangbao Island Nature Resort
Pink Elephant
R2A
Regalo Boutique
Republik
RDX
Rustan's
Steel
Spanadise
Tabilly's
Walking Walking Beach Hotel Boracay
Wellness Club at Days Hotel

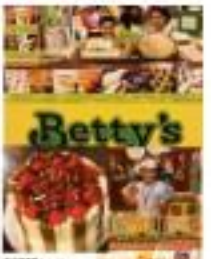
MINDANAO
All Flip-Flops
Apo View Hotel Boutique
Bajanhill Fashion Outlet
Bon Sabai Traditional Thai Massage
Chimes Specialty Store
Choo Choo-Baby
Circus Lifestyle Haven
Eusebio Home Store
JB & Co.
Mulberry Suites Business Hotel
Mustish
Mia Lee's Boutique
My Tiny Closet Too
Myx Boutique
Pearl Farm Boutique
Shelves & Hangers
Solely Yours
South Studio
Spryce
Sunkis
The Sidewalk

Flatter your feet instead.
Wear the world's favorite flip-flops

havaianas®

Original since 1962.

www.havaianas.com
www.facebook.com/havaianasphilippines



SWEET treats available in SM Pampanga, Betty's, native rice cakes, Banoy & Pansy mini cakes, Samuan-flavored polvoron and imported cookies at Candy Station.

Try these

By Irene C. Perez

[ARTIST] your sugar craving with desserts from SM Pampanga. Choose from your favorite kakanins, pastillas, cakes, cupcakes. Try a cup of coffee or chocolate or strawberry milkshake. The best part? All of the shops where these are served have been put up by the Kapampangan.

Betty's Native Cakes & Pastries

Betty's has been around for two decades, churning out kakanins ...or traditional rice cakes they're sold by piece, slice or by the box. Best for personalizing are the native cakes: cassava cake, maja blanca, suman, sapin-sapin, bibingka, puto bumbong, and kutsinta.

Honey and Daisy's Pastries

For pugon-baked pastries, check out Honey and Daisy's treats. The bestseller is the empanada or pizza stuffed in crochet cushion cuts. Have some longaniza, meatloaf, macaroni and cheese, pancit bihon, cashew tarts, empanadillas. Pastries and cold ones come in flavors like ube, cheese, butter, cookies and cream, chocolate, buko pandan, coke, calamansi and coffee.

Samuan Delicacies

Polvoron is a pastry made of toasted flour, sugar, butter and powdered milk. For the best polvoron, head out to Samuan Delicacies. Its plain and flavored polvoron, pastillas and egg tarts are also available in supermarkets and groceries around the country.

Cups and Cakes by Kaye Hernan

Since 2007, Kaye Hernan has been offering cupcakes and cakes for birthdays, debuts and weddings. They come in vanilla, moist chocolate and carrot. Brownies, caramel bars, secret recipe cakes, banana muffins are at P300 per box. Some goes for oatmeal raisin and oatmeal chocolate chip cookies in canisters.

Sweet & Fancy Caketshop

This cake shop has been offering sweet specialties in Old Pampanga since 2001. Sweet & Fancy makes photocakes, character and novelty cakes, cupcake towers. Ball gives color to any party. Also available are chocolate-dipped cookie lollipops, chocolate lollipops, mini cakes and buttercream cupcakes.

Candy Station

Candy Station wants to make important occasions more affordable for the Pampangueños. It offers cute stuff such as Hello Kitty and Bratz fondant gowns, cake kits, candy buffets and edible pompoms.

Coffee Overdose

Coffee Overdose offers cups of latte, cappuccino, hot chocolate, milkshakes, and specialized coffee concoctions such as Café Vienna and Almond Mocha Joy.

HONEY and Daisy's pastries. Coffee Overdose Almond Mocha Joy and Kaye Hernan of Cups and Cakes bakeshop

IN THIS ISSUE
■ The prime of Mommy D /C1

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Yellow parols from 'Ate Ballsy'

HOW DO you make a home-alone President feel right at home in the huge bachelor digs that is Pangasugan this holiday season?

Older sister Ballsy Aquino Cruz, thoughtful and wise like any "ate," might just have stumbled upon the right formula to make President Aquino feel some holiday cheer in the most festive way: one, even as he comes home every night to an empty house.

Ate Ballsy sent two huge yellow parol shaped like the signature campaign ribbon of the Aquino presidency. The parol, now fully lit, hang in both (largest the infinity pool in the garden.

Not romantic, but at least, a festive sight.

Vacation!

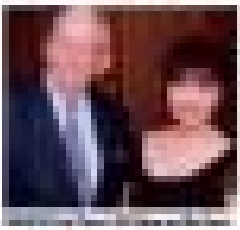
We all know a slew of late-teeners, born-both upper and lower houses, flew to Texas last Nov. 24 to watch the Pacquiao-Margarito fight. What we didn't know until recently was that not all of them came back. One senior, in particular, decided to go on vacation for the rest of the year, almost one full month before students went into session. We haven't had an official update from the senior who voted to tell him to work like the rest of them, but it didn't work.

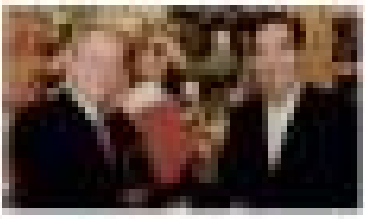
Now that the senior, famous for his inventiveness and, uh, limited grasp of what goes on in the august halls of the house, will be much missed. And to think this guy won quite convincingly in the last election, landing in the top 12. What were voters thinking? That he would still ride off into the sunset and do a good job? That only happens in the movies.

An angel came my way this holiday season

"The holy month here is endless, but I would hear the world with my regular Christmas to spend time ordinarily. We often say I believe God sent me at the wrong way

French envoy marks 2nd year with Cebu party, a flurry of Christmas tree lit-up ceremonies in top hotels



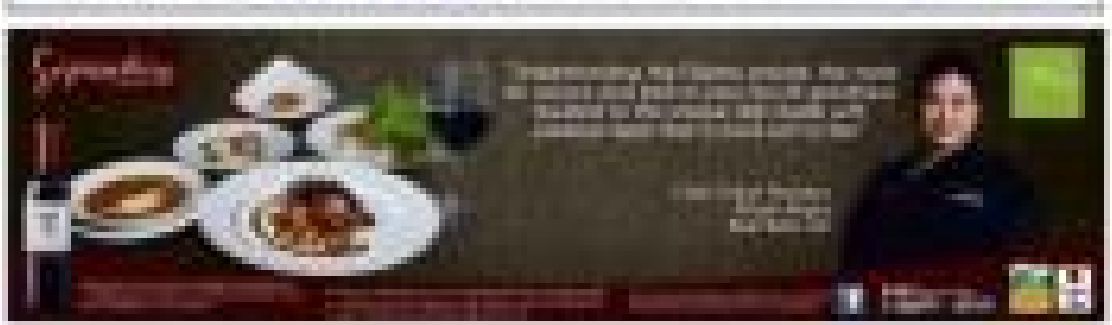


My father is into 'text-philandering'

Final Few Days Sale!

60% off

Easy Gift-Giving with SM Supermarket Christmas Baskets



NOCHE BUENA AT THE SM MEGAMALL

The Noche Buena is a Filipino Christmas tradition that celebrates our close family ties and love of good food. While this usually takes place on the night before Christmas, we also have smaller get-togethers with family members and friends during our long holiday season.
And the good news is that there are many dining choices the SM Megamall with rich, sumptuous menus with a Noche Buena feel. Here, Cajun Red Rock, Cabalen, Tokyo Tokyo, Dulcinea, and Goldilocks share with us their special Christmas menus that are great for gatherings a the restaurant or taking home to the family.

CABALEN

For the past 24 years, the Cabalen chain of restaurants has been every family's all-time and leading buffet favorite. Cabalen serves authentic traditional home-cooked food the Kapampangan way at reasonable prices, making it a perfect venue for gatherings during the holidays and beyond. Located at the Fourth Level of SM Megamall-A. Contact 633-1781 or visit our website at www.cabalen.ph.

Cabalen's Seafood Paella the seafood version of arroz valenciana, sticky rice topped with clams, crab, squid, mussel, shrimp at Php 137.91

Kapampangan's favorite Callos with ox tripe and ox cheeks at Php 226.88

CAJUN RED ROCK

Cajun cooking is a hearty and rustic mix of French and southern US influences that is part of the New Orleans culinary tradition. Cajun Red Rock gives us a taste of the Big Easy with robust and spicy offerings like Country Style Fried Chicken, Dory Fish with Christmas Ham, and Ribs with Apple and Walnut Sauce. Located at the Third Floor of the Mega Atrium. Contact 634-8387.

Ribs with Apple and Walnut Sauce: Sumptuous ribs served with a Christmas twist of apple and walnut sauce.

Country Style Fried Chicken with Potato Casserole: seasoned fried chicken served with gravy and potato casserole.

Dory Fish with Christmas Ham: Fried crispy fish glazed with strawberry sauce and ham gratin.

DULCINEA

Many of the specialties associated with a traditional Noche Buena spread may be found at Dulcinea: Paella, Chicken Galantina, and Macaroni Salad. This authentic Spanish restaurant serves these well- loved dishes and more, making it the perfect venue or take out place for holiday celebrations. Located at the Third Level of SM Megamall-A. Contact 634-0612.

GOLDILOCKS

For most Filipinos, the Goldilocks fairytale has two versions: a golden haired lass who encounters the three bears, and the bakeshop that has become an integral part of our way of life for the past 42 years. For the holidays, Goldilocks offers all-time Filipino favorites like Patabok, Kare-Kare, and Lumpiang Ubod in Party Packages for the whole family. Located at the Third Level of SM Megamall-A. Contact 633-0275 and 634-7939.

A mixture of meat and chopped ubod and other vegetables rolled in a thin homemade wrapper and served with peanut sauce. Serves upto 20 people at Php 830.

Goldilocks Party Fusfood Patabok is the signature dish of Goldilocks. Noodle topped with special patabok sauce and delicately flavored with shrimps,ground meat,and bean curd. It is garnished with ground chicharon,boiled egg, spring onions, toasted garlic, and served with calamansi. Enjoyed in 3 sizes, small, medium and large at Php 288.00, Php 420.00, Php 560.00.

TOKYO TOKYO

Since it opened in 1988, Tokyo Tokyo has been known for mass-elevating Japanese cuisine in its fast food restaurant chain. It continues to excite foodies today with its innovative take on Japanese cuisine with offerings like its lovely Beef Bowls which come in three exciting flavors: Garlic Mayono, Sweet Teriyaki, and Spicy Teriyaki. Located at the Third Level of SM Megamall-A. Contact 632-76-05.

Beef Mayono at Php 119

Beef Teriyaki at Php 119

Beef Yakiniku at Php 119

For inquiries visit www.sm-megamall.com or call 633-5042-46.

ENTERTAINMENT

Edna Emerie G. Velarde

INSIDE

■ Upstart TV channel still raiding 'sinking ship' network Rushes /L1

LIGHTS, CAMERA... The Inquirer Indie Tribute honorees face the spotlight.

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX
SWISS WATCHES • JEWELRY • DIAMONDS
LOUIS VUITTON
& OTHER DESIGNER BAGS • BEST PRICE • SPOT CASH
ALL ORIGINAL • PRE-OWNED
0917-8141967 • 986-4671
BAGAHOLIC

Indies find home in PDI

By Marinel R. Cruz

AT THE "1st Inquirer Indie Tribute" held Thursday night at the newspaper's Makati office, Ate Is Linda handed a plaque of recognition to her "baby" director Adolf Alix Jr. To her surprise, the veteran actress brought home a trophy of her own.

She recently won Best Actress for "Lola" at the 54th Asia Pacific Film Awards in Taipei. Her director, Brillante Mendoza, had accepted the award on her behalf, but Thursday he finally gave it to her.

MOST BEAUTIFUL BUDGET HOTEL
WHITE KNIGHT
HOTEL INTRAMUROS
Very Private, Superb Comfort, Historically & Culturally Mesmerizing, Free Internet.
Php1,750/night or call (+632) 5266339 / 5252381
www.whiteknighthotelintramuros.com

LEONARDIA. Cole Salvio, Aeriana Salvio, Inquirer's Ernesto Velarde and Isagani Yambot

RONNIE Lasista and wife Lois

GINA Pareño and Brillante Mendoza

MTRCB chief Grace Poe-Llamanzares and Inquirer chair Marixi R. Prieto

ADOLF Alix and Ate Is Linda

CHERRY Pie Picache

SM GIFTCARD
always the perfect gift

Available in different designs and denominations at cashier counters of SM stores nationwide.
www.smgiftcard.com.ph

Indies find home . . .

From page K1

Linda, other actors and industry leaders, among them censors chief Grace Ibuna, filmmakers, Film Development Council of the Philippines chair Briccio G. Santos, CineManila Festival director Tikoy Aguiluz, Cinemabuhay Foundation president Ben Jasmin, Independent Filmmakers Cooperative chairboy Joel Mercado Jr. and film producer Digna Santiago, gathered at the luncheon to pay tribute to 35 independent filmmakers for "revealing Filipino creativity and spirit to the world, and thus generating unprecedented recognition and goodwill for the Pinoy cinema artists."

The stars didn't mind sharing seats with other guests as the space at the second floor multipurpose hall was very limited. As one actress said it, "For the sake of the indies we must try," among those who showed their support for the indie spirit were Gina Pareño, Tessie Tomas, Eugene Domingo, Cherry Pie Picache, Julia Clarete, Monsour del Rosario, Soliman Cruz, Max Collado, Tirso Cruz III, Ketchup Eusebio, Raul Morit, Dwight Gaston, Mercedes Cabral, Ruel Vernal, Phil Noble, Angel Jacinto, Che Ramos, Ana Capri, Ricky Davao, Ronnie Lazaro, Mon Confiado, Yul Servo

OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE

36th Metro Manila Film Festival

"WHO IS ROSARIO?"

Based on a true story by

MANUEL V. PANGILINAN

CINEMABUHAY INTERNATIONAL with STUDIO 5

presents

An ALBERTO P. MARTINEZ Film

ROSARIO

Jennylyn Mercado

Yul Servo . Sid Lucero and Dennis Trillo

Ella Valdez . Ricky Davao . Isabel Oli . Empress Schuck . Jerold Aceron

with the Special Participation of Philip Salvador and Dolphy as Fidel

Visual Effects Elfin Animation Sound Design Warren Santiago Musical Director Albert Chang Editor John Wong Production Design Joey Luna Costume Design Mio Lhuin

Make-up Design Warren Munar Choreography Carlo Moreta Screenplay Elmer Gatchalian Line Producers Juan Carlos Banica . Jove Saddul

Executive Producers Bong Sta. Maria and Albert Martinez

Directed by Alberto P. Martinez

with English Sub-titles

IN THEATERS 25 DECEMBER

ALSO AVAILABLE IN DIGITAL

Indies find home in PDI

From page B7

CHERRY Pie Picache, Anita Linda, Twain Tomas, Eugenio Domingo and Alessandra de Rossi

MIKE Sandejas, Ronnie Roberts and Maycee Barra

KRAVN and Lodi de la Cruz

VIVA Hurt and Dwight Gaston

LANCASTER ESTATES

The Best Time For A Better Home Is Now

EASY to OWN! starts at P8,223 monthly

A bigger home means a better life and there's no better time to own your dreams than now.

Profriends, a trusted developer of quality communities, makes your dreams come true with Lancaster Estates.

Lancaster Estates features a Linear Park right at your own backyard where your children can play. Amenities include a clubhouse and swimming pool so your family can enjoy a day together right within your own community. It provides 24 hour security so that you can rest safe and secure in the comforts of your new home.

Just five minutes away from the new Coastal Road Extension exit, Lancaster Estates is just a short ride to the nearest mall, allowing you and your loved ones easy access to entertainment areas and to your workplace.

Avail of easy to own bank financing plans that offer affordable and flexible payment with an early move in scheme that allows you to begin your new life without delay.

Lancaster Estates
The best time for a better home is now.

(02) 4917700 www.profriends.com

PRO • FRIENDS
Creating communities, transforming lives.

ENTERTAINMENT

Upstart TV channel still raiding 'sinking ship'

By the Entertainment staff

IT'S QUITE perplexing why Upstart Channel is allegedly setting its sights on the stars of Major Network which has been partying a slew of problems of late.

Instilled a sexy spy. Why raid a sinking ship?

Male Star was reportedly being persuaded to make the big move, along with younger leading Lady.

MS is in denial, but LL is on a roll.

If it pushes through, what will become of MS and LD's latest project?

Reliable Source confirmed that there are swapping offers on the table for both stars.

(Another Dependable Male and MS had already signed up with UC on Friday.)

Relegated

Not only ex-stars may have been behind-the-scenes talents are being swayed by UC.

Top Director was purportedly

UPSTAIRS L2

A X'MAS SPECTACULAR FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

DIRECT FROM BEIJING OLYMPICS

6 DAYS TO GO!

THE GRAND CHINA NATIONAL ACROBATIC CIRCUS

SPLENDID!

DEC 25 TO JAN 2 - ARANETA COLISEUM

WOW

NEVER-BEFORE SEEN IN THE PHILIPPINES!

BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW! CALL 911-5555

SHOW SCHEDULES | TICKET PRICES

Celebrate Christmas without Guilt

HECKY'S LECHON

CebuStyleLechon

OvenBakedLessFatOrganic

"It's the Healthier Choice!"

OLYMPUS

digital gadGETs

HOT CAMS, COOL DEALS!

Available at 0% credit card purchase

T-10

with 4GB SD and Camera Case

ONLY P5,995

T-100

with 4GB SD and Camera Case

NOW P4,995

Tough-3000

with 4GB SD, Lens Pen and Tough Soft Case

NOW P10,995

DEPARTMENT STORE

cignal DIGITAL

DIGITAL MADNESS

Go Digital!

Enjoy massive discounts and freebies!

Get your favourite TV brands with great discounts!

Get bigger discounts or freebies if you bundle your TV purchase with a Cignal Subscription!

As low as P9,990 for a 19" LED TV!*

JVC PHILIPS SAMSUNG CHANGHONG

Catch us in the following areas:

MINDANAO. December 4 to 5 - NCCC Mall, Davao City

VISAYAS. December 11 to 12 - Ayala Mall, Cebu City

MANILA. December 18 to 19 - Glorietta 5, Makati City

visit: www.smcinema.com

SM CINEMA

visit us on facebook

ONLINE PROMO!

Win exclusive

Tron: Legacy items!

Visit www.smcinema.com and answer the movie question and get a chance to win these cool items!

IMAX

TRON: LEGACY

TRON: LEGACY

metro manila

luzon

visayas • mindanao

SM MALL OF ASIA | SM NORTH EDSA | SM CEBU

SM MEGAMALL | SM BACOOR | SM BAGUIO | SM BALIWAG | SM BATANGAS | SM BICUTAN | SM CALAMBA | SM CAUAYAN | SM CITY BACOLOD | SM CITY BACOOR | SM CITY BAGUIO | SM CITY BALIWAG | SM CITY BATANGAS | SM CITY BICUTAN | SM CITY CALAMBA | SM CITY CAUAYAN | SM CITY CEBU | SM CITY CLARK | SM CITY CONSOLACION | SM CITY DASMARIÑAS | SM CITY DAVAO | SM CITY GAPAN | SM CITY GENERAL SANTOS | SM CITY GRAND CENTRAL | SM CITY ILOILO | SM CITY LAOAG | SM CITY LAPU-LAPU | SM CITY LEGAZPI | SM CITY LIPA | SM CITY MALOLOS | SM CITY MARILAO | SM CITY MASBATE | SM CITY MEYCAUAYAN | SM CITY NAGA | SM CITY OLONGAPO | SM CITY PAMPANGA | SM CITY PUERTO PRINCESA | SM CITY ROSALES | SM CITY SAN FABIAN | SM CITY SAN FERNANDO | SM CITY SAN JACINTO | SM CITY SAN JOSE | SM CITY SAN LAZARO | SM CITY SAN PABLO | SM CITY SAN PEDRO | SM CITY SORSOGON | SM CITY STA. MESA | SM CITY STA. ROSA | SM CITY SUBIC | SM CITY TACLOBAN | SM CITY TARLAC | SM CITY TUGUEGARAO | SM CITY URDANETA | SM CITY VALENZUELA | SM CITY VIGAN | SM CITY ZAMBOANGA | SM DASMARIÑAS | SM DAVAO | SM FAIRVIEW | SM GAPAN | SM GENERAL SANTOS | SM GRAND CENTRAL | SM ILOILO | SM LAOAG | SM LAPU-LAPU | SM LEGAZPI | SM LIPA | SM MALOLOS | SM MARILAO | SM MASBATE | SM MEGAMALL | SM MEYCAUAYAN | SM NAGA | SM OLONGAPO | SM PAMPANGA | SM PUERTO PRINCESA | SM ROSALES | SM SAN FABIAN | SM SAN FERNANDO | SM SAN JACINTO | SM SAN JOSE | SM SAN LAZARO | SM SAN PABLO | SM SAN PEDRO | SM SORSOGON | SM STA. MESA | SM STA. ROSA | SM SUBIC | SM TACLOBAN | SM TARLAC | SM TUGUEGARAO | SM URDANETA | SM VALENZUELA | SM VIGAN | SM ZAMBOANGA

ONLINE TICKETING: www.smtickets.com
Get them at any SM Cinema Ticketbooths

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ARE ACCEPTED

OFFERS A WIDE VARIETY OF FOOD AND DRINKS AT ALL SM CINEMA LOBBIES

Ayala Malls Cinemas

EXPERIENCE IT BEST

NOW SHOWING at AYALA MALLS CINEMAS

3D

DIGITAL CINEMAS
GLORIETTA 4
GREENBELT 1 & 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
MARKET! MARKET!
AYALA CENTER CEBU
TRIBECA

Sunblaze members may earn buy or reserve tickets by texting Sunblaze to 2910 (Globe & Smart)
Or log on to www.sunblaze.com

At the Malls

GLORIETTA
Christmas Tree Fun Chorale
December 18 (6:30), Activity Center

GREENBELT
Dance Showdown
every Sunday of December, Greenbelt Lawn 3

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Caroling Challenge (Contenders)
December 14-24
Time and Venue TBA

AYALA CENTER CEBU
100-voice Bedtime Night Chat
December 21 (6:00 pm), The Terraces

BONIFACIO HIGH STREET
10-on-1 Live
Dec. 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 6pm-8pm, 6th Level Trillion Room

MARKET! MARKET!
Total Re-Mix! & Total Re-Mix! Kids
December 9, 12, 16, 19, 2-6pm, Neon Wing, GF

TRIBECA
Christmas Christmas Concert featuring Martin Nievera
December 9, 12, 16, 19, 2-6pm
Neon Wing, GF

MARQUEE
A Christmas Ballet Concert: A magical show about fairies, robots and sugar plum breaks!
December 16 & 19, 2-6pm, Activity Center

SHUTTLE
For booking & inquiries
please call 726-7481 to 90

Dazzle in delight as Pamparga's Giant Parols brighten up the Holidays!

December 25 & 26 • 6PM
MarQuee Park

MARQUEEMALL

glorietta | Greenbelt | Ayala Malls Cinemas | Ayala Center Cebu | Ayala Malls Cinemas | Ayala Malls Cinemas | Tri Nema | MARQUEEMALL

Upstart TV channel raiding...

From page 11

asked by Controversial Personality to handle a new show (Twas supposedly on the verge of joining Q)

Until Big Boss allegedly asked TD to stick with Isabo gained company for a couple of more years.

Scandalous source

Sensibilidad that doesn't just whip up intrigues to drum hear her own projects, but also those of her so-called friends.

Jolli Mora

III Bollywood babe Wilk of Mr. dito Kini. III showcased MW with gifts to grab her confidence.

MW fell for it and confided her marital woes to IS.

With dispatch, reports that MW and MP actor was on the rocks spread like wildfire.

Kinis who was the source?

From product to procurer

Handsome Actor used to be the apple of guys' eyes.

But now Uh has become a predator himself, cavorting with handsome hunks.

He has turned his pink passion into a booming business. From purchaser-dependent, Uh has reinvented himself to be procurer, scouting boys for big money.

Remember, Uh feels all too powerful as the Bibi compa-ni

Uh would never last as earrings and offer no apolo-gies.

Closet case

Gorgeous Guy has left a number of broken female hearts by the wayside.

Turned out Uh is a closet case.

EG is allegedly two-men and only had high-profile romances with women to fool the homophobic and conspic.

Something to ate running GE cannot hide his genuine for long—especially if his health problems be-come public.

GG needs to 'fess up pronto, said the uncle. Perhaps he can act as pastor boy for others who are similarly suffering in the dark?

Top of Bandera

The top show biz ones in the business talked and why we are stoned, if we are stoned.)

- Regine, ayaw nakod ang wedding gown (Superstitious?)
- Pinayuan ang halo, bihag si ion, Arnel Macho wrinkado? (Halos nerbiado.)
- Bitoin Concepcion, Hindi ako nimbakat ang bosses nya pwedeng i-adjust?)
- Mmmhmng na-kiss mwahh ng drags, dating amy aktres Bmchanes pati pamp (May kasamang nakapagk?)
- Cute, ilong third nagpondo sa take
- Ai Ai, Mag isa tatawag matinabam sa kwa Ik-o D'Way
- Nambawasa ang mga nanga-nalog na pinay, Amadon mahmahon ng lim-pas
- Magaling na ak-tor, hunin na manor
- Dahil raw mga power mga an ABS CBN, Ginawa kay Sunde Di pa kwapan si jeri' dinikang na ang aki-sampalan-an sabunan.)
- Kapuso, saan na hongsang Sarah-Geniano?
- Akala mo raw isang unang sikat, beauty queen-aktres nagpondo sa-ya-party
- Bitoin Chris, ang hala magdalaga
- Mistisa' aktor, kaka ng dakawang napanong buding (There's sampanyo?)
- Wazig artist, si-lmang nanganding kinit humalo ang dong ha.)
- Blessing, Pa-nanyang ang yaong nangyari-nyan
- Ley-ng paawar-ni Mr. Shooter, Pwde kaming mkikilang na-
- TT I bor, nagpas si Juliah Ebay lang, dito nanaalmusic.)
- Ankr Lapuz Ut pagsisay na mangaka-ler sa MMT?
- Bigating kasi sesikyam ng ejkwen, bid Lucero (nak nang puti?
- Dennis Trillo, sayo, nadapagpilo-pasi-nay Paolo (Pwede kang tri-se publisak.)
- Dahil sa pang-iskandalo ni Cristine, Sen. Miriar nag-sorry kay Sarah
- Dahil sa Mr ex-

VALERIE Concepcion

TV tayo sa TNT, pumilyo ni Kimkim, gale na gale

- Carlo Caparas, ibabus sa mga tigglero
- Celebrity doctors, makiusap mga mommy!
- Mother Lily gusong maka-date si Dimples
- Kim, pinglaruan si Sid Dalton
- Sabong ays ako kasi in dunyamada, Senior Lanc-ild sinaspindi as soap in Cebuano

AMYER Cruz

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 TRON (3D)
2 TRON
3 TRON
4 THE FIGHTER

Shang-ri-La Plaza

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD

Like us in

GALLERIA
MANILA
METRO EAST
NOVALICHES
FORUM ROBINSONS

Watch this movie in DISNEY DIGITAL 3D™ in Moviewor!d's DIGITAL 3D CINEMAS

STA ROSA
LIPA
DASMARIÑAS
STARMILLS
IMUS
ANGELES
TACLOBAN
DUMAGUETE
BACOLOD
ILOILO
GENSAN
ILOCOS NORTE

MOVIEWORLD

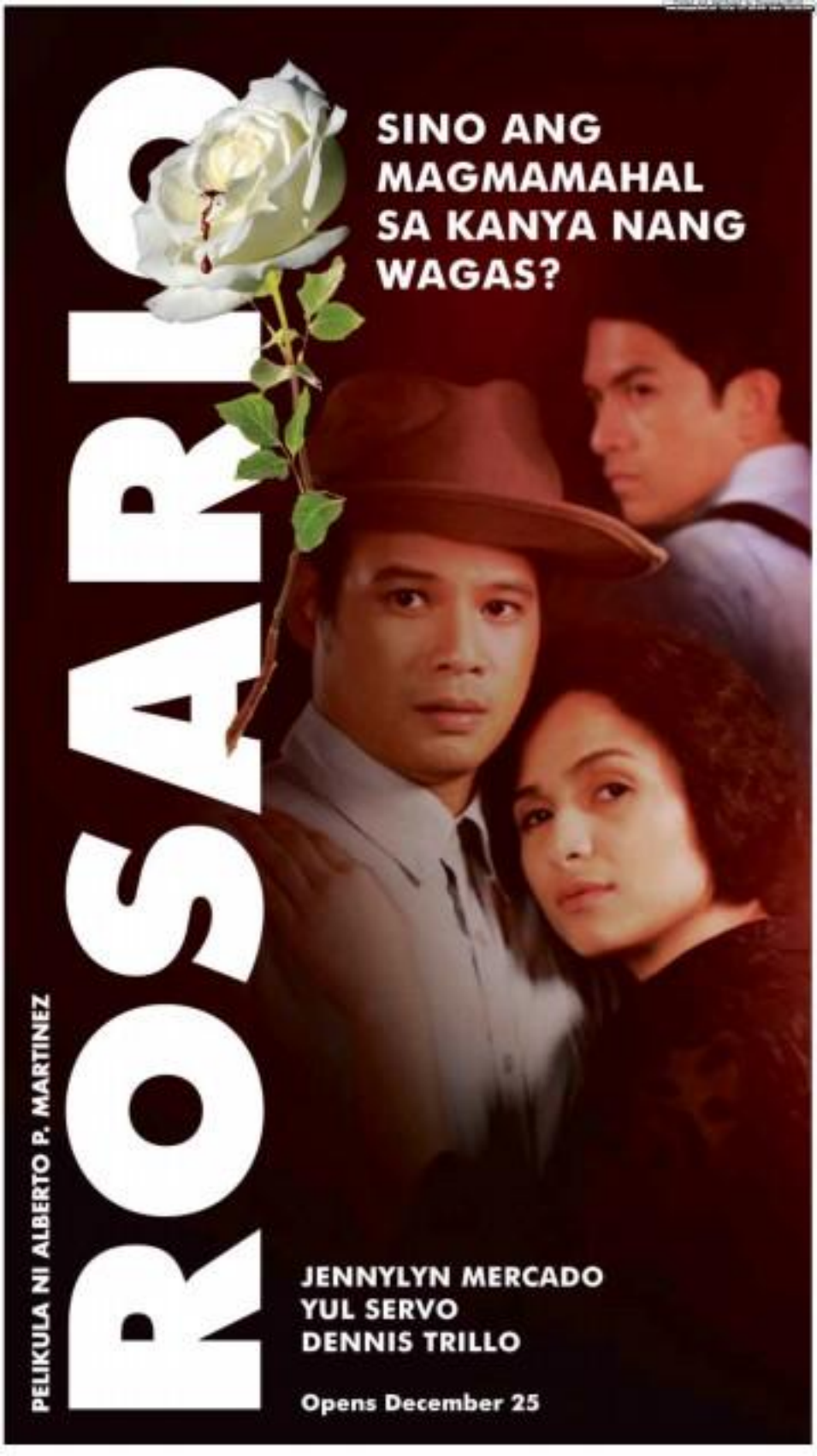
can be your Cinema

We can be your venue for advance screenings, private film viewings, corporate and school events, and other organizational functions.

"SPECTACULAR."
"HIGH-STYLE ADVENTURE."

TRON LEGACY

IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D AND IMAX 3D
NOW SHOWING


ROSARIO
SINO ANG MAGMAMAHAL SA KANYA NANG WAGAS?
PELIKULA NI ALBERTO P. MARTINEZ
JENNYLYN MERCADO
YUL SERVO
DENNIS TRILLO
Opens December 25

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Fil-Am actor stars onstage opposite Streep's daughter

LOS ANGELES—Filipino American actor Ramon de Ocampo is playing opposite Meryl Streep's daughter, Grace Gummer, in the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles' production of "Much Ado About Nothing" in the 630-seat Theater in Culver City, California.

Ramon, who also appears on TV and film, is Claudio to Gummer's Hero. Academy Award winner Helen Hunt also stars in the limited engagement play that ends its run today, Sunday, Dec. 19.

Critics' view

Variety's theater critic, Rob Weinert, wrote of Ramon's performance: "The most gifted of the group, the usually bland Claudio, is given welcome depth by Ramon de Ocampo, who shouldn't have much trouble accessing up the right passion, given lovely Grace Gummer as his virtuous inamorata."

LA Weekly's Steven Leigh Morris also praised Ramon: "The performances, particularly Ramon de Ocampo's Claudio and Grace Gummer's Hero, are so impassioned and intricate—exquisitely twisted by Henry dal [Much Marlboro] lacking out against his only child with rash ferocity—they all demonstrate exactly how close this comedy comes to the brink of tragedy."

Ramon, whom we've profiled several years ago, is an Obie Award winner for his performance in another play, "The Romance of Magno Rubio," which was based on a short story by the great Carlos Bulosan.

Miss Golden Globe

Speaking of Grace, her co-star in the Swedish series "Gigantic," Gia Mantegna, was voted by named Miss Golden Globe 2011. The announcement of the selection of Gia, who is the daughter of actor Joe Mantegna, was made at a party attended by Hollywood's young set at the trendy Coconut's restaurant in West Hollywood.

Gia follows in the footsteps of daughters of Hollywood actors who entered in the Golden Globe Awards like Melanie Griffith, Burner Willis, Lauren Bacall and Jeffy Fisher.

At the bash, we bumped into **Armie Hammer**, who played Ox Winklevoss twins in "The Social Network," a strong contender for the Golden Globe Best Picture (drama award). Armie, who made a good impression playing the rich, preppy brothers, is a actor in real life. He is the great grandson of the late industrialist and art collector Armand Hammer.

Eastwood biopic

Armie happily reported that he's working next on "J. Edgar," Clint Eastwood's biopic on FBI director J. Edgar Hoover who led a controversial professional and personal life. He said he was excited to be directed by Clint. Armie will play the lover of Hoover, who will be portrayed

By Amy Perez

RAMON de Ocampo, right, joins Grace Gummer and other cast of "Much Ado About Nothing"

BUYING ROLEX
AND OTHER PRE-OWNED SWISS WATCHES
BUY • SELL • TRADE-IN • REPAIR
NOW OPEN
WATCH PRO

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ambeth T. Ampoloto

MAG-STATUS UPDATE at MAG-SURF with
sun
P25
24/7 CALL & TEXT UNLIMITED
Super Loaded
UNLIMITED SUN CALLS
UNLIMITED SUN TEXTS
FREE 10 TEXTS TO OTHER NETWORKS
FREE 30 MINUTES OF MOBILE INTERNET!
Text CTU 25 to 247
sun CELLULAR PREPAID

METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

DOLPHY with Monique Pilapil

'Father Jejemon'

(WE ARE running this public service story urging you to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema time. The 36th MMFF runs from Dec. 25 to Jan. 7, 2011.)

Directed by Frank Gray Jr., written by Bibeth Orteza and Rhondu Reyes

Starring Dolphy, Cherry Gil, Maja Salvador, Ejay Falcon, Boy Alvarez, Tony Mabesa, Efrat Reyes Jr., Noah Tyron, Sandy Andolong, Shaina Magdayao, Jeffrey Quizon and Alluna Sotiaco

Produced by BMG Productions

In this comedy flick, Dolphy plays Fernando Jerome Manzon, or Father Jojo-man. He envisions himself to the people of the fictitious town Jherald because of his excellent and off beat ways. He plays rock music and organizes talent competitions. He even calls the name laws of his parish's all-women group as the Lady Yoga-Yoga, inspired by the pop singer Lady Gaga. Things take an interesting turn when the priest gets accused of child molestation. Dolphy, whose movie is up against other unrelated block-busters in the festival, said he is not after topping the box-office. "Gusto ko lang mapalabas ang mensahenan" he declared. Meriselle C. Cruz

Have a merry shopping season!
Renew your SM Advantage Card today!
Only P85
Plus! Get 10 points rebate when you use your SMAC points
Hurry! Take advantage of this limited offer now until Dec. 31
50%
Contact us at SM Advantage Hotline (632) 633-9999 | for Metro Manila | 1800-1888-9999 | for areas outside Metro Manila | or visit our website at www.smadvantage.com.ph

John Vesely is to Secondhand Serenade what Trent Reznor is to Nine Inch Nails

By Toni V. de Jesus
Contributor

SECONDHAND Serenade has a new album out, titled "Hear Me Now" (Warner Music). For those who haven't heard, the pseudonym of singer-songwriter John Vesely is best known for his songs "Fall For You" and "Your Call."

These are the tunes one usually heard on the radio in the wee hours of the morning while riding a cab. Why do JoVe like playing them?

Probably it's the songs' enticing acoustic sound and the sad but mostly hysterical voice of the singer that could keep people alert even when they're drunk. But are those tunes really new nudes or actually ones stuff that the youth love to ingest nowadays?

Does the phrase the heavens-declared things with Vesely, who has expanded the group with other members. Many would surely raise a bowl of prayer for the compromise. Slowly is to 10, what Trent Reznor is to Nine Inch Nails.

Your songs speak of longing, regret, devotion, failed relationships. They would rain the jaws or blues albums. Ever thought of doing those styles?

Well the influence is there because my father was a professional jazz musician. Growing up, I remember in seventh grade, I played jazz with my dad. I played the saxophone and the base guitar. It was my father who showed me how it's possible to follow your dreams and stick to your goals no matter what.

What kind of jazz did your father play? John Coltrane or Earth, Wind and Fire?

Most of the Coltrane and Miles Davis stuff. He has lots of stories about them.

How about those musicians?

Not so much, but I do appreciate their passion in music. They're completely honest to what they do.

You managed to break into the commercial music scene via the indie route. Was it difficult?

It's not that difficult. Nowadays it's easy to connect with the audience even if you're just starting on your own. The technology is there. With my first album, "Awake," I just posted songs in SecondHand Serenade's MySpace account and got noticed... even got voted No. 1 indie artist of the month. There were invites to play in bars in the Unit Franciscos Bay Area. Next thing I know, I have a manager and a record label. But I did pay my dues. I was a bum playing for random bands for eight years before I hit the jackpot.

How does it feel growing up in Manila Park? Is there something about the place or the people that makes the smarter people, like, say Thomas Edison and, ahem, well, you.

Laughs! It's a relatively quiet little city. Manila Park is an ideal place to grow up in. But it's the San Francisco Bay Area that helped me a lot as a musician. There are so many good styles there where musicians can play and develop their skills in jazz, blues, heavy metal, rock, punk, grunge, acoustic, they're all there.

How is "Hear Me Now" different from the first two albums?

Very different. It's more about connecting with my fans. [The first album, "Awake," had songs about wooing his ladylove who became his wife for three years; the follow-up, "A Twist In My Story," was about how they drifted apart as a couple and eventually divorced].

The Secondhand played in Manila recently. Was the band an influence, and when are you coming here?

Gie Bisnosno is a fantastic band. I listened to a lot of its stuff when I was starting. Its music has an acoustic feel. And that's what I really wanted to do back then. Hopefully the January we can add the Philippines in our tour because we have shows in Indonesia.

We're looking forward to that. Any veteran musicians you want to collaborate or share the stage with in the future?

Wow, I think playing with Coldplay would be a dream collaboration. And U2, also. Who knows what will happen? Let's see. In the following years, all I want to do is come up with more albums.

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
THEATRE-MALL
PROMENADE
1 2 3 4 5
MARIA N'T

Fil-Am actor stars opposite Streep's...

From page F1

by Leonardo DiCaprio

Fashion show

Former Binibining Pilipinas Lisa Mandigo-Brennan, who's now an award-winning TV producer based in LA, graciously hosted a fashion show by Filipino-American designers David Tupaz and Joey Galvez at her breathtaking home at the Hollywood Hills in the hills above Sunset Boulevard.

Lisa, so lovely and dispels as when she ruled the night to represent the Philippines in the Miss International pageant in 1982, won a Daytime Emmy three times as one of the producers of the numerous programs, "Cristina's Grand." Lisa's niece, Ariana Rhiannon Tinsley, who is the reigning Miss Asia USA, was one of the models who walked on a ramp built over the pool.

Actress Rai Ling, in a sexy dress, pointed to us a gown by David that she purportedly liked. She stood out in the Hollywood set audience. Fil-Am Oliver Gomez, a Hollywood talent manager, entertained us in some of his discoveries.

Emmy's sister, Krista Stanillo, who is pregnant with her baby with husband Jeff Lim, couldn't come because she wasn't feeling well but her parents, actor Blair Stanillo and Linda Tupaz Rosello, graced the event.

It was a gathering that showed the holiday collection of Joey (who is based in Las Vegas), David's custom jewelry line, and Krista and David's collaborative fashion line under the label Krista.

On one way out, we met Allan Dennis Hick, who earned Academy, Golden Globe and Grammy nominations for co-writing songs like "Hot to Trot" (from "The Rocketeer") and "For the First Time" (from "The First Day"). Allan proudly said that he co-wrote a track, "The Truth Is," in Charice's LE album.

E-mail the columnist at rmpalo_5565@yahoo.com.

NOW SHOWING at MARQUEE CINEMAS
THE AMERICAN
EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Experience Show Business at its BEST!
myCinema
Welcome to the country's one & only true private cinema.
GREENBELT
NEWPORT CINEMAS
TRON
TRON IN 3D
TRON
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA | 3D
POWER PLANT CINEMA
TRON LEGACY
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA | 3D
TRON LEGACY | IN 3D | 3D
The End
of long lines
of missing the first few minutes
of waiting for the next screening time
BOOK AND BUY YOUR TICKETS AT THE NEW ENHANCED SURESEATS.COM
SURESEATS

Local action films on comeback trail

A NUMBER of action stars, led by Robin Padilla, Lester Bledsoe and Rene Requiestas, have initiated separate moves to revive and revitalize local action movies, which have largely been in a state of unexplained animation for almost a decade. They efforts should be commended, since the once dominant film type used to be one of the Filipino film industry's most popular and dynamic genres.

In particular, if action movies are successfully revived, they would provide a much-needed incentive for male viewers to patronize local movies again. That's a laudable goal that deserves everyone's support.

To share that the task is not only necessary but also difficult to achieve, it's key to remind ourselves why local action movies were rejected by the movie going public in the first place.

It all began when action movie producers took their loyal fans for granted. The stories they told were overly familiar and lacked imagination and creativity and they churned them out without much effort and excitement.

In addition, the stars-producers aged, became fat and lost their vitality and macho briskness. As producers or line producers, they paid themselves too much and acquired too much power, insisting on appearing every major scene in the star-aspect of the productions. And some of them cast leading ladies who were young enough to be their daughters...or even granddaughters!

At first, the starving public and movie financiers tolerated these excesses, because their action stars' movies still made zero money for, when they ended up in the red, the offers stopped coming, and some action stars had to retire, while others reinvented themselves as TV/film comedians. Oh, what a fall that was!

As local action movies lost their ability to delight and excite, their former fans shifted their allegiance to the big, American action-adventure blockbusters that teamed them with their huge budgets and high-tech production values, upstaging their phlegmatic and indolent local counterparts so completely that they eventually ceased to be produced.

So, what will it take to revive and reinvigorate the Filipino actioner? Aside from comeback efforts on the part of Robin, Bong, et al., new action stars have to be discovered and built up. There's a new generation of young actors out there that has to be provided with correspondingly youthful heroes to relate to and root for.

But, just as stars need to be new, the movies they top-bill should at least be revivals of the old style of action cinema that worked for the stars they have, but can't recite young fans now...because the times have definitely changed.

Before coming out with new action films, producers should spend a lot of time and effort to insightfully discover what about the current time has decisively changed; what the new audience wants to see; the times, stories and issues they need to see depicted on the silver screen; and the updated storytelling styles and production techniques that will "speak" most dynamically to, about and for them.

That's the difficult part. But, if it's entered into with great care, focus and imagination, success for the new Filipino action film will be much easier to achieve.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Lea's live CD, DVD out now

SONY MUSIC, Ambisyon Media, Benny Fresh Asia's Best and The Peninsula Manila team up for the release of "Lea Salonga ... Your Songs"—a live CD and DVD recorded and videotaped from the singer's 2009 concert at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay.

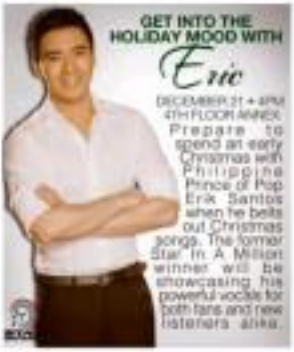
Accompanied by the Filharmonika orchestra under the baton of her brother Gerard Salonga, Lea performed a repertoire dreams exclusively by her fans...including contemporary hits like Lady Gaga's "Poker Face," Beyonce's "Halo" and Amy Winehouse's "Rehab"; power ballads "Making Love Out Of Nothing At All" and "Open Arms"; OPM love songs "Kahit Isang Saglit" and "Sana Maulit Muli"; musical theater numbers from "Les Miserables" and "Wicked," and many more.

"It's probably the most diverse repertoire I've ever sang, and because of that, it was also the most fun," Lea said.

The album also features guest singers Ai Ai de las Alas, Jett Pangan and Richard Poon, and the hip-hop dance crew Philippine All-Stars.

DELIGHT IN THE THRILL OF HARMONIOUS PERFORMANCES at SM City North Edsa!

Experience the joy of the season as you witness live Christmas performances that will set your mood for shopping.



JOIN IN A DAY OF GIVING WITH
Star Magic Kids
December 19 • 1pm • SkyDome
Take part in Star Magic's meaningful charity as they present a variety of performances. Prepare to see stars including the Going Bulilit kids, Alakim the magician, Making Morales, and many more.

WALK TO YOUR FAVORITE KOREAN MOVIE SOUNDTRACK WITH
Nyoy & Sabrina
December 19 • 4pm
4th Floor Annex
Be infected with the Korean fever as Nyoy Volante and Sabrina perform at the Perfect Match Mall Show.

'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

Make your loved ones feel more special with great gift finds only at SM City North EDSA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA MALL SCHEDULE	
Nov. 30 - Dec. 30*	10:00 am - 11:00 pm
Except on:	
Dec. 4,11,17,23	10:00 am - 12:00 midnight
Dec. 24 & 31	09:00 am - 07:00 pm
Jan. 01, 2011	12:00 pm - 09:00 pm

For Inquiries: Please call 929-3641 or visit www.smnorthedsa25years.com